

T H E
Roman Brides Revenge.

A
TRAGEDY;

As it is
Acted at the *Theatre-Royal*, by His
Majesty's Servants.

Grace Guidott

— *Me Lætori credere Mallem,*
Quam Spectatoris Fastidia ferre superbi, Hor.

L O N D O N :

Printed for John Sturton, at the *Middle-Tem-*
ple-Gate, in *Fleet-street*, 1697.

Dramatis Personæ.

Gaius. Emperor of Rome; in Love with *Portia*.

Martian. Prefect of the Prætorian Cohorts and Generalissimo of the Roman Army; in Love with, and Contracted to *Portia*.

Aurelian. His Friend, and Brother to *Portia*.

Perennius. Favourite to the Emperor; in Love with *Portia*, a Villain.

Lætus. His Friend and Creature.

Cleander. Faithful Slave to *Martian*.

W O M E N.

Valeria. Empress.

Portia. Sister to *Aurelian*, betroth'd to *Martian*.

Crispina. Maid to *Portia*.

Guards, Attendants, Priests, &c.

To *William Gregory, of How-Caple, Esq;*

THE *Author* having given me leave to choose a Patron for his *Play*, I knew not where to make a better Choice than You, *Sir*, who Inherit the Virtues of your Grandfather, the *Worthy Mr. Justice Gregory*, as well as his Estate. He, who so honourably acquitted himself of the great Trust of *Speaker of the House of Commons*: He, who Exerted the Patriot in the worst of Times, and shew'd himself an *Englishman*, when 'twas dangerous to be so; who chose rather to resign his Place on the Bench, than oblige an *Arbitrary Prince*, by putting a forc'd Meaning on the Laws, to serve his Turn, in destroying the Subject: But his Virtue was rewarded, and this happy Revolution saw him in the Chair, where he discharged the Duty of a Just Judge, a Good Christian, and a Charitable Benefactor; in short, who liv'd below'd and dy'd lamented by all Men: I could not, *Sir*, I am sure, oblige the *Author* more, than by putting this his first Endeavour under the Protection of the Heir of this great Man, who does in nothing degenerate from so Excellent an Ancestor; and I, *Sir*, have no less Satisfaction, in making Use of this Opportunity, to shew how much I am,

Your Oblig'd Humble Servant,

J. Sturton.

PRO

PROLOGUE.

When the hot Sun with scorching Beams does shine,
 With Ice we calm the raging heat of Wine.
 Our Author in like Circumstance is cast;
 He cools his Fancy to oblige your Taste:
 He underwrites to please, and frames his Wit,
 Exactly to the Level of the Pit.
 Knowing what Stuff will pass, 'tis his Intention,
 Never to Soar above your Apprehension.
 Therefore he writes to you, the Mod'rate Wit,
 True Country Squires, conceited Fops & Cits,
 Pimps, Pandars, Parasites, Prigs, Beaux & Bullies,
 And Whores, with all their Equipage of Cullies.
 I think I see one there, just so attended;
 Since the Vacation, Lord, how things are mended!
 I told her Fortune then, which I remember
 Was, she shou'd get new Rigging in December;
 Now I Jo. Haynes protest upon my Honour,
 She's there, with all my Prophecie upon her.
 In me a strange Prophecie Spirit reigns,
 Which I impute to an Excess of Brains,
 That does my Business upon each Occasion,

For none I hope will think 'tis Inspiration.
 A Poet came to me the other day,
 To learn the Destiny of his new Play;
 Urg'd by good Nature, I in pitty shew'd him
 How to prevent a Shame the Devil ow'd him;
 But he wou'd onto meet the Critics Shot;
 So Volunteering Poet went to Pot.
 Our Author brings you here his Virgin Muse;
 A Virgin you shou'd gently, gently use:
 And if she's Auker'd, now, at the beginning,
 Consider this is her first time of sinning:
 Like your kept Misses, more experienc't grown,
 She hopes to give Content to all the Town.
 Ladies, I'm sure you will be pleas'd to day,
 For he has two constant Women in his Play:
 And if he's not deceiv'd, a pretty Tale,
 But yet he has this Refuge, if that fail,
 When Poet's Plots in Plays are damo'd for Spight,
 They Critics turn, and damn the rest that write:
 So the State Plotter on the like Pretence,
 Missing his Aim, becomes an Evidence.

EPILOGUE.

Spoke by Misse Allison.

Well, our sad Poet is the lazy't Rogue,
 H' has sent me here without an Epilogue.
 What shall I do?—no matter what I say,
 It need have no Relation to the Play.
 The Poet fancies that I'll plead his Cause;
 Tell you of Passions, and Drammatic Laws:
 Or lash the growing Follies of the Town,
 But I have other Business of my own,
 Tho' you may think my Rose not yet full blown.
 I, who must make my Fortune o' the Stage,
 Will ne'er expose the Vices of the Age:
 Which I expect to find my chief Support;
 And thrive by them, as Flatterers do at Court.
 'Tis not for me to ridicule a Beau;
 I may get Good of him, for ought I know.
 Why shou'd I call that Damme Spark a Bully,
 Or the good natur'd keeping Fool a Cully?
 When I as well as others, soon may hope
 To be maintain'd by some conceited Fop.

T H E

Roman Brides Revenge :

A

T R A G E D Y.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Grove, at the end of it, a Magnificent Temple : Solemn Musick is heard at a Distance.

Enter Perennius and Latus.

Per. **S** H E's gon ! Oh ! *Latus ! Portia's gon for ever !*
This Night, this very Hour, within you Temple,
That rough hewn Soldier, *Martian*, bears her from me !
What is *Perennius* now ? What his Glory ?

His boasted Favour with *Rome's* Emperor ?
The feeble Exhalation of a Night,
That strikes a Terror into none but Boys.
For what are all that dread me here but Boys ?
The only Man, *Rome* holds, contemns my Frowns.

Latus. 'St not so loud within the sacred Grove,
Or you disturb the holy Juglers Omens.

Per. Oh ! that I durst disturb the hated Rites,
That rob me of my Peace, and of my Love !
Snatch the bright Maid from the pale quaking Priests,
Rifle her Sweets ev'n in the awful Temple,
And break the fullen Malice of my Fate.

Lat. Now, by the Gods, why loose you thus your Temper,
In impotent Complaining on your Fate ?
If you want Power to supplant your Rival,
Exert the States-man, and contrive Revenge.

B

Per. What

Per. VVhat can I think ? or how can I contrive ?
 VVhose ruff'd Thoughts in mad Confusion rowl ?
 The different Gusts of Hope, Desire, Despair,
 Rage, and Revenge drive on the furious Billows,
 And to a Hurrican toss up th' impetuous Storm,
 That wrecks my Temper, sinks my cooler Counsels,
 And leaves me without Refuge from Destruction.

Lat. Come smooth this rapid Tempest to a calm;
 A minutes Calm may safely make the Port.
 Think of the Emperor ; you know the ways
 To twist, and wind him as your Interest leads :
 You feed his changeful Appetite with Pleasures ;
 His Anger, and his Smiles are at your beck ;
 As *Martian* like a Gyant scale your Heav'n,
 Make your fond Love destroy him with his Bolts.

Per. Alas ! I've try'd my Pow'r with him in vain,
 In only this he's fixt against my Will.
Martian alone, of all his Father's Friends,
 Yet braves the Shock of my destroying Hand.
 Here I am foil'd, for like a vast *Colossus*,
 He stands too firm, and mighty for my Gripe.

Lat. He must be undermin'd then —
 Call to your Aid, the well known Arts of Court,
 Those sure can shake the Emperor's Resolves :

Per. Oh ! 'tis not to be done,
 I've try'd him in his Wantonness of Favour :
 His peevish Gratitude for Life receiv'd,
 From *Martian's* Hands surrounds him as a Bullwark.

Lat. Despair not yet, for you will surely have her ;
 The Wife perverts the Virtue of the Maid,
 And Husband warms her for the Lover's Arms.

Per. Oh ! no, she's Virtue all, and stubborn Chastity,
 Cold as th' Iicles of severest Winter,
 Unfussy'd, as the Rose within the Bud,
 Before the Morning Sun has kiss'd it open.
 Itell thee, I may as well hope to possess
 A Goddess, *Dianna's* self, as *Portia* ;
 She has no Pride for Flattery to work on ;
 The Vanity and Folly, that betray the rest
 Of Womankind, lose all their Force on her.

Lat. Believe not that, Nature has made 'em all
 Of the same Various, and inconstant Mould :
 When the gay Baits is fitted to their Taste,
 They change, and clasp the sweet Temptation fast :
 Remember she is Woman Sir —
 Woman, that loves with Violence to Day,
 Is cold to Morrow, and ev'n hates the next day.

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Remove your Rival, as I'll shew the means;
Then time, and the soft Dalliance of Court,
And warm Adresses of a vigorous Lover,
Will melt her waxen Virtues down before you,
Deface the old, and make what new Impression
You shall like best——

Per. Proceed.

Lat. 'Tis not th' Emperor's Gratitude preserves him,
You know him better—— for himself's the Center
To all the Morions of his Love, or Hate.
He thinks he holds the Soldiers firmer to him,
By giving them their Darling for their Leader.
Since on their sickle Wills his Empire hangs.
He wou'd repose that Trust, where most secure;
And *Martian's* oft try'd Loyalty perswades him,
That he has his, as he the Armys Hearts.
But prove him false, you rouse his Native Fears,
And ev'n his Doubts will fix his certain Ruine.
For when he doubts, no longer he will trust him,
And Safety bids him end his Trust with Death.

Per. But for this Proof, my precious dear Contriver.

Lat. Produce you me, to charge the Treason home,
You can't want swearing Rogues enough to vouch it;
That is a Trade in *Rome*, Families live by't,
And never blush to own their Occupation.
Enforce but you his Popularity,
His ancient *Junian Race*, that twice freed *Rome*:
Shew how h'affects their old *Roman* Manners,
Ev'n in his wedding Revives th' Obsolete Rites
Of *Conferreation*; his nice Palate
Can relish nothing of our present Times.
Th' Emperor's Fears will swell the Fantom so,
He'll fly like Lightning to the Holy Temple,
And crush him in the very Hour of Bliss.

Per. There may be Life in this, I like it well,
I'll winnow so his Looks, his Words, and Actions,
That I will shew he's more of Chaff, than Corn.
Snatch we this Moment, this white Lock of Time,
Before he comes here to these damn'd Espousals.
Ha! let's away, for see the Pomp draws nigh,
Follow'd by *Portia*, and the fatal *Martian*.
I cannot bear the sight: I'll blast his Joys,
And in the Harbour of his full fraught Wishes,
Sink the gay Pinnace with her goodly Cargo.

(*Exeunt Ambo.*)

SCENE II.

Enter Flamens, Augurs, and Pontifices in their Robes, follow'd by Heautboys, Flutes, and Trumpets; after them the Camilli with the Sacrificing Vessels in their Hands, with the Officers of the Sacred Rites; next the Auspices, then the Flamen Dialis, the Camillus Puer, and Portia led by three Boys, follow'd by Martian. As the Pomp passes on Martian and Portia come forward.

Mar. **P**ortia, my Love, dismiss these needless Terrors;
For I will fold thee fast within my Arms,
And fence thee round from all these spreading Mischiefs:
My Love shall chase thy Griefs and Fears away,
And with fierce Kisses warm thee into Joy.

Enter Aurelian.

And see thy noble Brother, my *Aurelian*,
Come from the War t' extend my growing Bliss! *(They Embrace.)*
Oh! let me clasp thee thus my Friend for ever?
More welcome to me, than Wealth to Poverty,
To Sick Men Health, to haras'd Countrys Peace.

Aur. My Master, Brother, Father, Friend! Oh! thou
Dearer to me far than Fame, or Victory.

Por. My Brother!

Aur. My Sister too! this gives a double Pleasure *(They Embrace.)*
For my past Fears, to find thee thus secur'd
From the Assaults of: the injurious Court.

Mar. Her Roman Vertue is her surest Guard.
Is not this Triumph worth a Soldier's Toyl?
So brave a Friend, a Wife so wondrous good?
Oh! m' unruly Joys! — give, give you Gods,
Your glittering Boons of Gold, of Pow'r, and State,
To those mean Souls, who think 'em worth their Hopes;
I'll not have less, nor can you give me more
Than full Possession, of my present Store.

Por. You see my Love the Rites attend us!

Mar. Proceed. *(As she's led forward, she looks back on Martian.)*
O! my Friend, support me!

A sudden shiv'ring shoots through all my Veins,
As cold, and chilling, as the hand of Fate.
For as my gentle *Portia* parted from me,
Methought she grew all pale, and wan, as Death.
Now by the Gods, the dreadful Fantom works so,
I cannot bear the ghastly Image of it.

Au. 'Tis but the Deluge of too mighty Pleasure,
That bears your Spirits down th' impetuous Stream.
The shock will soon be over.

Mar.

Mar. O! it is more, and Fate I feel is in it;
The Gods are angry at my Happiness!

Aur. Have they not Reason think you?

Mar. Ha!

Aur. When you amidst this Hurricane of Nature,
And all th' expiring Gasps of falling Rome,
Deaf to their Calls, are lost in lazy Love?

Mar. Touch not my Love, I charge thee, touch not that.

Aur. Ha! but I must, I came to rouse you from it.
Is it for naught d'ye think, that the Wise Gods
Send such amazing Prodigies among us?
Nothing but wild Confusion is all round,
Nature seems sick, and these her dying Pangs,
The Sun, her Soul, shines with diminish'd Light,
Or rather sheds a gloomy Twi-light on us;
No genial Heat to raise the sickly Herbage,
And cheer the drooping Reliques of Mankind.
The Earth, as weary of her guilty Burthen,
With dire Convulsions ope's her Pond'rous Jaws,
And sucks whole Cities with their People down.
The Sea swells o're its ancient Boundaries,
And drowns whole Countries; thro' the Air are heard
Sad hollow Groans, and lamentable Screams,
That kill like Mandrake's Shreiks, all those that hear 'em.
And is this then a time for Bridal Joys?

Mar. Ha this! all this! and from my *Pertia's*, Brother!

Aur. Pardon me Sir, I taste the noble Honour
You design her, but must prefer my Country
To all, to ev'ry Good, that's meerly mine.
His Countrys Glory is the Soldier's Idol!
For 'tis for her he toyls in Forreign Camps;
She cools his Heats, and warms his freezing Limbs;
Fires his large Soul with that Immortal Fury,
That with undaunted Ardor hunts her Foes
Through all the bloody Tempest of the Field.
The Gods select us Soldiers from Mankind,
To give our Country's Safety to our Care;
Shall we betray that Trust then, Who shou'd guard it,
And while her harra's'd Armies starve abroad,
Here see her rifl'd by Domestick Spoilers,
The pointed Dagger levell'd at her Heart,
And loose the Sense of it in unmanly Pleasures?
O! Virtue, Honour, whither are you fled?
When *Martian* has forgot your glorious Charms!

Mar. Enough my Friend, I own the guilty Charge,
Thou' st got the start of me in Glorys Race,
I own I've been a Lag; all shall be mended.

And

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And Rome shall find, that I've not yet forgot her;
Be but thou still my Friend.

Ans. Oh Sir, forever!
Be sure of that, not all the Shocks of Fortune,
Or wearing time shall e'er pervert my Faith.

Mar. Then let's away, till to my Portia's Bosome,
And in that Aromatic Flame

Burn off the Dregs that clog my rising Soul;
And on the Eagle's feather soaring Virtues,

As from th' Imperial Summit Pile,
Mount up the Roman's just avenging God,

And purge their City from the sitty Herd
Of Pimps, Bawds, Flatterers, Informers, Ruffians,

Alserers, and Betrayers of the public Good,
Exert the Soldier in this noble Cause,

And fix their Freedom, and restore the Laws.
Ans. Bravely resolv'd, away then to the Temple,

And thence to cheer your longing Army's Hearts.
Mar. It shall be so; but see th' Emp'rour comes,

And with him Perennius,
That Monstrous Birth of prostituted Favour.

(Exeunt.)

Enter Emperor, Perennius, Lætus, and Train. Perennius, and Læ-
tus seem to speak to him as he enters.

Em. There needs no more, you've made his Guilt most plain,
And he shall find that Calpurnius will not

Bear his Wrongs like a poor Tame Plebeian;
For I will punish him, as he deserves.

Nor shall the awful Temple there protect him,
I'll treat my Justice with ingenious Mischief,

Ev'n to the height, and wantonness of Revenge.

(Pass on to the Temple.)

Scene opens and discovers a magnificent Temple; during the Ceremony the
Emperor gazes earnestly on Portia.

The Solemn Invocation and Music.

O Juno! Goddess! O Mighty Jove,
Diana! and thou brightest Queen of Love,

Who, o're our Nuptial Rites preside,
Show'r united Blessings on our beauteous Bride.

Give her Health, and give her Joy,
Give her ev'ry Tear a Boy,

Brave as his Father, as his Mother Good,
Full of the Virtues of his ancient Blood.

Send us kind Omens while aloud we Sing,
Jo! Thalassius! Jo! Jo! Thalassius! Jo! Jo!

When

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When the last Chorus is sung, the Flamen Dialis leads Portia to touch the Fire, and the Mater an the Altar, at another Flamen does Martian, they cross, so that while one touches the Fire, the other touches the Water, and when the Chorus is done, the Flamen Dialis asks Martian, Will you Caius have Cata to be your Wife? He answers Yes: Then he asks Portia, Will you Caius have Caius to be your Husband? As she's going to answer, the Emperor steps between, and separates them.

Emp. **N**O, by the Gods, I swear it ne'r shall be,
Sooner shall Tygers wed the bleating Sheep,
And Birds engender with the baskful Serpent
Sooner shall all Extreains unite, than Thou, and Portia

Mar. Gods—— good Gods fix my flaggeling Pity.
That I don't violate your holy Dwellings
Per. Alas! my Boding fears! what means the Emperor?

Emp. To snatch thee from Perdition, from a Traytor.

Mar. Traytor, what? What Villain has traduced me?
And is my Virtue so unknown to you?

Emp. Traduce thee? Oh! Impudence, Oh! acted Virtue!
With such false Bairs you catch my needles People
To back your Treasons; but I'll tear thee Scorpion,
And heal the Wound up with thy gulliey Blood.

Mar. Produce the Villain that will dare accuse me?

Emp. It is enough, that I'm convinc'd 'tis true.

Mar. It is too much, too much, ingrateful Prince;
Have I for this, upheld thy sinking State,
And stem'd the Torrent of o'flowing Foes,
That from each side came rowling in upon thee?

Ans. Oh! have but Patience: do not fix your Ruine.

Mar. Preach Patience to the Winds or raging Fires:

They'll sooner hear thee. Shall I bear my Wrongs

Like Boys, and Women with secret Moans, and Tears?

No, by the Gods, I'll urge his Baseness home,

Upbra'd him with Ingratitude to's Face.

Have I not left the sweets of downy Peace,

For the fierce Shock of Weather, and of War,

The parching Heats, and the bleak freezing Colds,

To keep thee safe in thy inglorious Ease?

Have I not spent whole sleepless Nights in Arms,

To keep your lazy Slumbers here unbroken,

On Beds of Roses with lewd Whores, and Boys?

Whilst the Ambition of your mighty Mind

Soar'd not above some Kitchen Myllstone

And durst not hear the Barres that I fought.

Emp. Ha! durst not hear 'em? Base detracting Envy,

Be Witness all how I disdain this Boaster.

(Pauses a little)

He

He knows it well, when Fury once prevail'd,
For I fight War, not out of Fear, but Choice;
How I like *Mars* in this Phlegmatic Plume;
Quaff'd stern *Indignus*, and drove home the *Golbs*,
Whose numerous Swarms struck *Rome* it self with Terror.

Mar. It was a Start quite from thy Native Bent,
And yet ev'n then thy Cruelty burst out,
With wild Delight enjoy'd the bloody Field,
VVanton'd in Goar, and sinn'd your brightest Action.
Like a wide wasting Plague, y' impeopl'd Countries
That own'd the *Roman* Pow'r, you then had fal'n
A Victim to th' avenging Army's Rage,
Had not my misplac'd Love most timely quell'd 'em.

Em. I'll hear no more.

Mar. You dare not, by the Gods!

You dare not hear how much you are indebted,
Because you have resolv'd you ne'r will pay.
Your Life you owe me; and your Empire too;
To me you owe the Pow'r, by which you wrong me.
If you not like it, why return the Gift.

Emp. This Insolence is never to be born.
Guards seize the Traytor, I'm not late ev'n here.

Mar. Oh! the just Gods! — pauses a little — but I deserve it all!
For if I am a Traytor 'tis to *Rome*.

To let this purple Monster lay her waste,
For she derives her Sufferings all from me,
Her VVidow'd Matron's Pangs, her Orphan's Tears,
Her ravish'd Virgins, and her murder'd Fathers,
For 'twas from me she took thee for her Lord.

Emp. It is enough — there needs no farther Proof,
Away with him.

Por. O! Emperor hear me, hear the wretched *Porcia*!
If ever gentle Pity touch'd your Soul,
For Honour, and for Justice hear me speak!

Mar. Kneel not to him, nor urge him by such Motives,
How can he pity us that sports with Murder?
And laughs at all the Groans of *Rome*?
How can the source of daily Wrongs love Justice?
Or Honour move his mean degenerate Heart,
That leaves his noble Father, still in Bonds,
The shameful Footstool of the *Persian* King,
Who, still unpunish'd when he mounts his Horse,
Treads on the hoary Majesty of *Rome*.

Emp. What e'er he does the Majesty of *Rome*
Shall not be beard in th' imperial City.
Therefore away with him to the *Tiber* Rock.

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Por. Stay, stay till I've spoke but to the Emperor.
O! Sir, consider, will you kill your Soldier?
Your Empire's Guard, and for a few rash words?
Forc'd from him by this Burst of sudden woe?
To have me snatch'd from his impatient Arms,
Ev'n in the brightest shine of his full hopes!
To lose me when he most did think me his!
Oh! 'tis enough to make him talk, and rave!

*To the Guards.
Kneel again.*

Emp. Rise Noble *Portia*, I must not let you kneel.

Port. O! I will kneel as long as I have Life;
Till I can move your cruel Breast to Pity.
Think what it is to lose a thing you love,
Though but a Trifle, and as he loves me,
For Oh! he loves me; good Gods how he does love me!
His very Soul is bound up in my Faith;
I'm sure 'twould kill him should I speak unkindly;
Indeed it would; and when you drag me from him,
You tear the very Strings of his poor Heart.
Think what the wild convulsive pangs of Love,
Of wondrous Love, wou'd force your Tongue to speak!

Emp. Well Madam, you've Charms I find that will prevail;
His Life I give you, ev'n against my Peace;
But see you learn Compassion from me, Fair One,
I shall expect it.

Mar. Barbarian, I dispise thee, and thy Pity.
I charge thee do not dare to banish me,
For if thou dost—

Por. O! do not rouse his Wrath I've lulPd asleep;
But with me kneel, and own the generous Gift.

Mar. How! *Portia*? is this kind to thank the Tyrant
For the extent, and utmost stretch of's Malice!
Life without thee is lingering on the Rack.

Por. Ha! without me? forbid it ye just Powers!
No, I will wander with thee through the World;
Through the bad World, to find out a Retreat
from Villany; for Virtue, and for Love.
Come let's away, for Exile's only here.

Emp. Go see him strait without the City Gates.
To the Guards.
Hold, Madam, you must stay and shine in Rome;
The leading Star of all her glittering Host.

Por. Stand off—
Snatching her Hand away, and flying to Martian,
catches hold of his Arm amidst the Guards.
For I'll go with my Lord, my Love!
Thus will I cling to him as long as I have Life:
Not Death it self shall loose my eager hold.

Emp. Dogs, Hell, and Furies, am I not obey'd?
Cut off the Traytor's Arm, ev'n in her grasp?
And drag him hence, and drive him out of Rome;
If he comes back, he dyes.

Por. Oh! hurt not him; for see my Hands are leas'd. *(The Guards struggle, and offering to cut his Arm, she lets go.)*

Mar. Dogs! barbarous Tyrant! bloody Villains! *(He's born out.)*

Por. Stay, take one parting Kiss, stay prithee do;
Stay but a Moment, for I've much to say,
Believe me constant, think me thine for ever.
Not Racks, nor Torture shall pervert my Faith!
Oh let me hear from thee! each tedious Minute,
I'll send thee back my restless Throws and Pangs,
My eager Longings, and my raving Wishes.

Looking up } Ha! he is gone! torn from my panting
and about. } Bosome!

Torn from me in the Temple, at the Altar!
Revenge it Gods upon this bloody Tyrant!
Pour on his guilty Head, Distreis and Ruin,
Poverty, Contempt, Rebellion, Slavery,
Knaving Diseases, Leprosies, Plagues, and Famine!
Blast all his Hopes, and Wishes in Enjoyment!
Seize him ye Furies, sink him, plunge him in profoundest Hell!
For my poor *Martian*! for my injur'd *Martian*!

Aurel. Forgive me Friendship, if I'm silent now;
Or seem to break thy holy Laws to keep 'em!
It is the only means of dear Revenge;
If I dissemble well, I gain the Pow'r
To crush the Tyrant, and restore my Friend.

Aside.

Emp. Wrong not thy Vertue thus for a black Traytor,
But lift thy Eyes up to a Monarch's Love.

(To Portia,

offering her his Hand,

Por. Ha! Love from thee! --- blasted be thy Tongue,
That spoke the guilty word! thy Mind that form'd it!
I ne'er shall fall from the auspicious Height
Of *Martian's* Love, to th' low Abyss of thine.
O! no! the vast Descent's too terrible,

And my Soul sickens at the dreadful View.
Avant, be gone, nor with one touch pollute me.

(Starts away from him.)

Aurel. Forbear my Sister, before the awful Gods,
T' affront their Sacred Image in your Prince!
But know the generous Honour, that he means you;
And let me give you to his Royal Arms.

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Por. Is it *Aurelian* spoke those guilty words?
Sure 'tis impossible! desert thy noble Friend
On the first shock of his unequal Fortune?

Aur. No Friend can ballance with my Emperor's Will:
He, and the Gods, require our first Obedience.
Nor shall you fondly throw away their Blessing.

Por. O *Martian*! *Martian*! How wilt thou believe it.
A part of me is false to thee already?
Oh! Where is Virtue fled? Apostate Wretch!
How I dispise thee, and disclaim thy Blood! (*pauses a little.*)
Oh! break my Heart, this is too much to bear!
Stand off, and give me Room, that I may dye,
I will not stay in this contagious World!
O let me fly aloft to the great Gods,
And snatch their idle Thunder to destroy you!
Oh! Oh! Oh! (*Faints away.*)

Emp. Ha! by the Gods, she faints! go bear her gently
To the Imperial Pallace; Quiet, and Musick
May smooth, and lull this Frenzy of her Mind.
Come to my Arms, my Brother now, and Friend, (*to Aur.*)
Thy Zeal for me shall meet a just Reward;
The Prize thou giv'st, deserves my Diadem!
For on her Love depends thy Emperor's Life.
Bound with these Bonds, my Empire thou shalt share.
Thine be the rugged Glories of the War,
And mine the boundless Joys of this soft yielding Fair.

The End of the First ACT.

C 2

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

*An Anti-Chamber in the Empresses Apartment
in the Pallace.*

Enter Perennius and Letus.

Letus. **H**Ave but a little Patience. —

Peren. Patience!

Now Curses on thy Counsels, they have ruin'd me;
And then thou thrusts me out to slavish Patience.
Patience! the lazy Refuge of mean Souls,
That rather bear, than struggle with their Fortune.
Gods! how I despise it; if I fall, it shall
Be in a manly grapple with my Fate;
While my large Ruins crush ye all to Atoms.
No more of thy dull Counsels.

Let. You lik'd 'em once.

And by 'em have remov'd your pow'rful Rival.

Peren. But rais'd a greater—set *Portia* farther off,
Beyond the bounds of my extensive hopes.
M^y Ambition too's defeated; for her Brother
Wears all the Plumes of his degraded Friend,
And fond as a Child of's new gaudy Cloaths;
Already's gone to take possession of 'em.
Had I but gain'd that point, my love had thriv'd,
Spight of the changeful Emperors Will, or Pow'r.

Let. I know not what you think, that look through Mists,
Through Clouds of Passion; but to me I swear
By the great Gods, that all seems wondrous Well.
Why are we here else? at this dead of Night?
And by the Empresses Order? but with freedom
To consult your mutual satisfaction.
Is she not raging with neglected Love?
Repents she not with more than equal Ardor,
Th' estrang'd Affections of the Emperor?
But you will lose this means of Happiness,
Rather than have Patience! slavish Patience!

Per. Pardon me Friend, my Soul is on the Rack,
I cannot think of losing heav'nly *Portia*!
But wild distraction seizes on my Brain!
And like a Whirl-wind rends my very Heart up.

But.

But I am calm again, now *Hope* appears,
Temperate as Age to hear *thy* Story out.

Lat. When I say I told her of it—

Per. Ay then! What said she?

Lat. At first she silent stood, as struck with Lightning,
Fixt were her Eyes, and motionless each part,
The charming Red forsook her beauteous Face,
And left it bleak, and wan; then in a moment,
A fiery Blush o'er-spread it; and from her Eyes
A show'r of Tears burst with impetuous force,
As if they meant to quench the angry Flame
That burnt her Cheeks. And then you might have seen
Pride, Love, Desire, Despair, Fear, and Disdain,
Rowl, clash, and break like furious meeting Tydes;
Till in this mighty Hurrican of Passion,
The wretched Princess sunk into her Chair.

Per. Proceed, this Story moves me.

Lat. It would be

Tedious to repeat her various Agonies,
And all that past till her tempestuous Rage
Had work'd it self into a calm of Thought,
How to redress, if not prevent her Wrongs.
But having inform'd her of the share you took
In her Sufferings, she appointed this Place,
And Time, for our Consultation; and I
Have got, I think, the means of both your ease.

Per. As how my best Friend?

Lat. You see the Empress comes.

You shall partake it with her.

Enter Empress.

Empr. Divorc'd! thrown from him like a loath'd Embrace!
Am I grown old and ugly in one Month?
Gods! I shall be the out-cast of the Court!
The Laughter, or the Pity of the Vulgar!
Of ev'ry fawning Rascal! Oh! my Heart!
May all the Plagues he has invok'd light on him!
For his base Perjuries! Oh! but I love him,
Ev'n to Distraction Love, th' ingrateful false one:
That blunts my Rage, and quite disarms Revenge,
Converts my Curses on my Tongue to Blessings.
I have no Refuge left, but sad Complaints;
And those, but fan the fury of my Love;
Set all his Charms in my despairing Eyes,
Shew me the dear, blissful, heav'nly good I lose.
Oh! Death! Confusion, 'tis not to be born!

Lat. I cannot see such Beauty in such Grief!
I will break off the anxious Scene, Madam!

Empr.

- Empr.* Ha, *Latius*, are you here, *Perennius*, too?
 'Tis much to find two Friends, and in-Disgrace.
Per. Madam, such Beauty wrong'd can ne'er want Friends.
Empr. Flatter me not, for I'm grown old and wither'd.
Lat. Fresh by the Gods; and Beauteous as the Morning.
Empr. Oh! were I so, how could m' Emperor slight me?
Per. His Appetite's too weak to taste so fierce a Joy.
Empr. Is *Portia* fair? for yet I never mark'd her.
Per. Bright as *Pondora*, made by all the Gods,
 T' allure the stubborn Heart of the first Man.
Empr. Ah! me!
Per. But, Madam, to the means of your Relief.
Empr. Ay my good Friends, proceed.
Lat. The Emperor's Passion is yet but young,
 And by removing *Portia*, wou'd soon dye;
Per. And then his Love for you in course revives.
Empr. But how! how shall I compass this Design?
Lat. Madam, I have a Friend among the Vestals,
 Who will convey her safely to their Temple.
Per. Their Habit gives them passage where they please;
 Nor will she scruple to venture with a Priestess.
Lat. Thence may she make her wish'd escape to *Martian*.
Empr. If she does love but half so well as I,
 She will be swift to catch this blest occasion.
Lat. But she must haste to use this dead of Night.
 The Priestess shall be here within an Hour.
Empr. Well, I'll away to free her and my self;
 For while she's here, no hopes for me remain,
 But a black Scene of dreadful Woe, and Pain.
Per. Well, but how wilt thou perform this lucky Thought?
Lat. Why, I will be this holy Vestal Virgin,
 And bear your *Portia* for you, to your Arms.
Per. Let me embrace thee, thou Soul of brave design,
 But finish this, and all my Fortune's thine. (Exit.)

SCENE II.

SCENE II. Portia's Apartment.

Scene opens, and discovers Portia lying in a Melancholly posture on a Couch. Enter the Emperor.

Emp. SUCH was *Ewopa*, such bright *Danae* was,
And such was *Leda*, thus transporting fair,
When with dilusive Arts great *Jove* compress'd 'em!
Oh! that I cou'd, like him, but change my Form,
T' assume that likeness, that wou'd please you most.
Gods might unenvy'd, keep their Joys above,
I'd wish no other Heav'n but my Love.

(She starts from her Couch, on discovering the Emperor.

Por. Ha! is he here? and at this dead of Night!
Oh! guard my Virtue Heav'n from the Tyrant! (Turns aside.

Emp. Why d' ye start? why turn those Eyes away?
That like *Achilles* Spear shou'd heal the Wounds they gave.

Por. O Sir, for Virtues sake with speed retire!
I must not hear, nor see you at this time.

Emp. Oh! name not Virtue with that charming Face,
Beauty and Virtue are at Mortal odds,
And as irregular as Frosty Summers.
What has that melting form to do with Virtue?
That artful Dawb of the Deform'd and Old,
To force from Men a faint regardless look,
Who else wou'd never mind 'em.
Beauty and Youth abound with Love Charms,
And from their own bright source of Heav'nly Fires,
Diffuse around soft Flames, and warm Desires.

Por. Oh! name not Love, that is a noble Passion,
Disdains the barren Soil of guilty Minds,
And only sprouts in the warm Sun of Virtue.
Can'st thou, that tamely bares insulting Nations,
See'st Tyrants burgeon on each side, each day,
Without one Check, can that low groveling Soul
Pretend to reach the lofty hights of Love?

Emp. Mistaken Notions lead your Sense astray;
Love dwells not in the noisie busie Breast,
But in the sweet Retreat of Peace and Joy,
Now, by the Gods, the *Trojan* Shepherd chose
With Judgment, when for Beauty he refus'd,
The rugged Cares of Courage, and of Kingdoms.
Let th' Ambitious take the busie World,
Thou shalt to me be Victory and Crowns.

Ambition

Ambition will but give the half his Heart;
I'll not with-hold ev'n the minutest part.

Por. Oh! how my Soul disdains thee!
Thou, that hast held the Chariot of *Rome's* Glory,
With such a feeble Rein, that it is fain,
With vast Rapidity, from its full Noon,
Down to the doubtful twilight of its Set.
How canst thou think to move a *Roman* Mind,
Full of the injur'd Genius of her Country,
That groans beneath thy mean Tyrannick sway?

Emp. Well! I will draw the inspiration, hence;
And from thy Lips suck that old *Roman* Virtue,
That for thy sake shall make pale War look lovely. [*Goes to her, Em-
braces her; She struggles from him.*]

Por. Stand off! imperial Villain! touch me not!
Thy footy Soul pollutes me from thy Mouth;
Cou'd I tell how, I'd stop thy guilty Breath.

Emp. How lovely is thy Rage!

Enter Empress.

What brings her hither to disturb my Bliss?
My Soul was flutt'ring with the very Kiss. (*aside.*)

Por. Thanks to the Gods for this deliverance.

Empress. Where is this Trayteress? Where those baneful Charms
That hold my Emperor from my longing Arms?
Ha! he is here! here at this Midnight hour, [*Sees him.*]
All raging Love, and she within his Pow'r!
Her Virtue must too weak a Guard have been,
Against the force of such alluring Sin.

Emp. Wrong not, by your fond Jealousie betrayd,
Th' immortal Virtue of this heav'nly Maid;
In Contradiction by the Gods, design'd,
To our false Maxims against Woman kind;
For in a Court, in spight of Force, or Pray'r,
She's Constant, Chast, a Woman, Young and Fair.

Empress. Why will you then pursue a fruitless pain?
Fly what you have, for what you can't obtain?
Return my Wanderer; O! return again!

I Sigh, I Pant, I perish by delay;

(My sleeping Cares, my Pangs, and Fears all Day)

Come to my Breast, thou'st been too long away.

When scarce awake, about my Arms I cast,
With eager hopes, to press my Emperor fast;

But he not there, I draw 'em back gain;

Then reach all round, but all alafs! in vain;

For he's fled from me, who should ease my Pain.

My Fears awake me, and I gaze around,

But there no Print of my false Love is found;

Frighted

The Roman Brides Revenge.

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Frighted I rise, to seek where he is fled ;
Then throw my self upon my Widow'd Bed.

Por. O ! Emperor ! can't such a tender Love
Your stubborn Heart with gentle Pity move ?

Emp. Her nauseous fondness but provokes my scorn.

Por. O barbarous Wretch, sure of no Woman born !
No soft Compassion harbours in thy Mind,
But all thy Deeds confess thy Savage kind.
Foolish as false, slight the best Joys of Life,
In the Embraces of a constant Wife.

Emp. A Wifes Embraces are all pall'd and dull—
Besides, your Image fills m' extended Soul.
From your fierce Love no Refuge I can find ;
Like Guilt, inexpiable, it hants my Mind ;
Converts me all into its self like Fire,
In which, like Fuel spent, I must at last expire.

Empress. O ! try by Absence, to dissolve these Charms !
Fly from her Witchcraft to my Circling Arms.

Emp. Too weak that Circle to secure my Heart ;
Sh' has spread the Poyson through each vital part.
Absence alas ! attempts my Cure in vain,
Absence it self augments the charming Pain,
The more I'm from her, still I love the more,
Possession only can my Peace restore.
But there Fate stands, and with an awful Brow,
Checks each fond Wish, and every eager Vow :
Drives me all naked from Hopes warmer Air,
To the severest Winter of Despair.

Por. Behold more kind, and nobler Beautys there.

[*Pointing to the Empress.*

Emp. You turn my Eyes from you, to her in vain,
'Spight of Despair, and all its gasty train ;
I'll love you still, and fond the raging Pain.
Nor to pale Night will I resign my Breath,
But shun the enticing blandishments of Death ;
Death to your Pow'r a speedy end wou'd give,
But in the Tortures you ordain I'll live.

Empress. Believe him not, for he is all Deceit,
Taught by my Ills, avoid the treacherous Bait.
For, ah ! by fond Credulity betray'd,
I thought all true the lov'd Dissembler said :
Believ'd his Words, addrest with all the Art
Of strong Perswasion, to subdue my Heart.
Believ'd his Oaths, believ'd each tender Vow :
Believ'd his melting Tears, which artfully did flow !
The fatal shelf of Faith in him, oh ! shun,
I but believ'd him, and I was undone !

D

Poriss.

The Roman Brides Revenge.

Porcia. Fear not fair Empress any wrong from me,
How little he can move my Heart, you see.
His Words, like empty sounds, pass by my heedless Ears,
His Love gives me no Pleasure, and his Threats no Fears.

Empress. See, she rejects you! whether would you fly?
It is not *Porcia* doats on you, but I.
Oh let me reap the Fruit of her kind Scorn!

Emperor. Away, this fondness is not to be born.
Nor do you much insult ingrateful Fair,
On thee I will revenge these Pangs of my Despair.
I will not long, thus burn with hopeless Fires,
Nor groan beneath the weight of impotent D-fires.

Por. Thy threats don't touch me; more than thy vain Love.

Empress. Hear me, O hear ye conscious Pow'rs above,
How oft he swore the *Tyler's* Streams shou'd go,
Back sooner to the Source from whence they flow:
That Sun and Moon shou'd sooner loose their Light,
And bury Mankind in Eternal Night.
Than he be false. Then *Tyber* quickly turn,
And with inverted Volumes hast t' your Native Urn:
Rise Darkness, rise, and hide us all, for he's forsworn:
The dear Protester now is faller grown,
Than Wind, or Ocean, or the changeful Moon.

[*Pressing him in her Arms.*

Emperor. I cannot, will not love, nay, see you more.

Empress. O! ye just Gods, who heard him when he swore!
By *Juno*, *Venus*, *Vesta*, and by *Jove*;
To me, and me alone Eternal Love.

Why ye tame Gods, why don't ye strike him dead,
Why don't your Bolts pierce his devoted Head? [*Pauses.*

— Ah no! good Gods spare, spare his precious Life, [*Kneeling.*
Transfix the Heart of his abandon'd Wife.

Emperor. I'll hear no more ———

For such Contagion her soft Words impart,
I feel a Foreign Pity storm my Heart.

[*aside.*

Empress. O! you must hear me, for Pity's sake, but hear,
To my Complaints you may afford your Ear,
Though your dear Heart be gone ———

Emp. ———— I must away,
I shall betray my weakness if I stay.

[*He struggles to get from her.*

Empress. Oh! stay and tell me, tell me, prithee do,
Why thou deserts thy wretched Empress so?
What Crimes your Anger, and Aversion move,
But a too mighty tenderness, and Love?

Emperor. Stand off ——— and loose me, or ———

[*Clapping his Hand on his Dagger.*

Empress.

The Roman Brides Revenge.

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Empress. Draw not thy Dagger, thy poor Wife to kill,
Thy Cruelty will do't---indeed it will. [Weeps.]

Emperor. There's a Confusion fixes me in Ill,
Methinks it is unworthy me to yield.

No, I will fly, since I can't keep the Field. [Breaks from her and Exit.]

Empress. Oh! he is gon, the cruel false one's gon!

Por. Pursue him, *Madam*, and the day's your own. }

Your Goodness bore his stubborn Vices down,

And for just Pity made a noble way,

You suffer them to rally, if you stay.

Emp. O! I am weary of this fruitless Pain!

Gods! must I waste my Charms, and Youth in vain,

No I will arm me with severe Disdain.

A generous Pride my surest Guard will prove,

Against the Fury of my hopeless Love.

[Pauses.]

Ah! no---it will not be---my Heart rebels,

And all the Efforts of Pride my raging Love repels:

Well, I will after him---pursue him still,

And if he will not love me, sure he'll kill!

Oh! that he wou'd ev'n so but give me Rest,

I'd clasp the dear Destroyer to my dying Breast.

[Exit.]

Por. Unhappy Princess, may'st thou find Success,

For mine is twisted in thy Happiness;

If thy strong Virtue but Triumphant proves,

We both shall reap the Harvest of our Loves.

[Exit.]

SCENE III.

Changes to the Street.

Enter Martian and Cleander.

Mart. **C**leander, prithee leave me with the rest.
Surpriz'd, turn'd out to the inclement World,

Naked of Help, I have no means to keep thee.

Banish'd, proscrib'd, a Price set on my Head,

My only Bosome Friend, that shou'd have lent

His Shoulder to support this sinking Atlas,

Flyes from me with the common nasty Herd

Of Knaves, Sycophants, Buffoons, and Flatterers.

And with my Laurels decks his Faithless Brow.

All shun me like Infection; therefore leave me.

Cleander. Oh! Sir, dismiss this Avarice of Woe,

And let your Servant share your wretched Fortune!

As he has done your Good! I'm no Summer Fly.

To love your Shine, and fly your stormy Weather.
My Industry has got some little Treasure
Under you, that may help you in your Exile.

Mar. Why should'st thou love me so, who by me
Alone hast lost thy Freedom.

Cle. n. ——— Dear Sir,
I lost my Freedom in my Country's Cause,
And in amends Fate gave the best of Masters;
And may I on a Dunghill, like a Dog,
Rot, rot piece meal, if e'er I forsake you.
Is it so hard, to let your poor Slave starve with you.

Mar. Yes, for 'twou'd be unjust, and shock my Nature.
O false *Anclian*! O degenerate *Rome*!
Learn Faith, and Virtue from this noble Slave!
Honest *Cleander*, I have no business for thee,
I'm at the end of Life's uneasy Journey,
And can reach Death's near Inn without thy help.

Cle. O Sir! far be that Thought! your Country calls
Implores your Help, to free it from Oppression.
Fly to the Army, they will own your Cause,
And save lost *Rome* from black devouring Knaves.

Mar. 'Twill be in vain, for Knaves will still be uppermost;
They float aloft, like Chaff upon the Water,
Which though by moving you a while disperse,
Soon as the ruff'd Element is settl'd,
They gather all a top again.

Cleas ————— Think of your *Portia* then,
When you are gone, where will be her Rescue?

Mar. Ay, there *Cleander* thou hast touch'd the Note,
That breaks the drowsie Charm of lazy Death,
And makes my Soul exert its Native Fire.
What leave her, to the Tyrant's Will and Pow'r?
For him to brood o're all her chaster Sweets!
Gods! good Gods! how that wild Thought distracts me!
No, I will live, for her thus curs'd will live!
And rouse the sleeping Soldier in my Bosome.
To win the Army to revenge her Wrongs,
Crush the black Tyrant, and deliver *Rome*.
Force may be swifter than their distant Rescue.
Therefore I will secure my *Portia* first.
And she in safety, I can't perish all.
It shall be so ———— *Cleander*, I'll employ thee.

Cleas. Blessings on you Sir, let me embrace your Knees, [*Kneels*
and embraces 'em.
For this kind Word; you shall see your Slave,

Fly through impervious Dangers, ev'n to death ;
Swift as Revenge or Jealousie to serve you.

Mar. You say the Guard takes you for *Portia's* Slave ?

Clean. I have been with her often since the Evening,
Went with her in the crowd too from the Temple.
Trusting my Faith, she sent me oft to find you,
And beg you hasten to deliver her.

Mar. She shall be obey'd, for I'll now to her.

Clean. Sir.

Mar. With her consult of means for her escape,

Clean. The Army, Sir, is the only means she hopes.

Mar. Th' Army's uncertain, for they are *Romans* too.
Romans, and once my Friends, therefore must be false.

Clo. This way you perish, known to all the Court.

Mar. No, I will take thy Habit, and so pass.

Clo. Consider Sir,

Mar. No more I am resolv'd, thou'lt find me in the Porch of *Vesta*.

Clean. I must obey, may all the Gods protect you

Thunders.

Mar. A sudden clap of Thunder without Clouds,
A waving Sword i'th' Air,—'tis wondrous strange. [pauses.

Avaunt be gone ye dreadful boding Omens !

For I will on, since Love will have it so.

If I have err'd ye ruling Powers above,

'Tis by the force of a resistless Love ;

Spare her, for I alone am Criminal,

And on my head let all your vengeance fall.

Give me relentless Gods this one relief ;

With this Encrease enrich my Barren Grief ;

Then shall I have the Cordial Joy to see,

My *Portia* happy by my Misery,

In that vast pleasure loose my wretched state,

And smile at the vain impotence of Fate. [Exit.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT. III

ACT III. SCENE I.

*Portia's Apartment in the Pallace.**Enter Portia at one Door, and Martian in Cleanders Habit at the other.*

Por. **W**ELL, good *Cleander*, hast thou seen my Lord?
And will he haste, to rescue his lost *Portia*?

Mar. With all the speed of longing eager Love: [*Runs to her and embraces her.*]

Port. Unhand me Slave — What means this Insolence? [*She starts from him.*]

Mar. What does not then my charming *Portia* know me?
And can a thin disguise conceal her *Martian*? (*He pulls off his Beard.*)

Methinks her Heart should beat at my Approach;
And by its Sympatherick Throbs reveal me. (*She looks earnestly at him while he speaks; and after the first word runs into his Arms.*)

Por. Martian! — ha! My Lord! my Love! my Life!

Mar. Portia my Soul! my Bliss! my Heav'n! (*They Embrace.*)

Oh! do I hold thee once more in my Arms!

The full Amends of all my Sufferings past!

Port. Where hast been poor Wand'rer? Where hast been?

What hast thou done? How have the Gods dealt with thee

Since thou wert ravish'd from me at the Altar?

Where is the Army? Will they own thy Cause?

Are they come with thee? Am I free from Bonds?

Answer me — tell me all; Oh! tell me quickly!

For I have yet a thousand things to ask;

And horrid strange, prodigious things to tell thee.

Mar. Speak on — I'll answer thee with Kisses; press thee

Close to my Heart, while on thy panting Bosome

I breath the dear Distractions of my Fondness!

Loose all my Grievs; all thoughts of pressing Fortune

In this Abyss of Joy, of beamy Heav'n!

Eternal Raptures of Almighty Love

Dance round my Heart, and make me grow Immortal.

Por. Oh! I am faint with Joy; Convulsive Heavings

Extend my Bosome, and my throbbing Heart

Flutters about, as if 'twould beat its last!

Mar. Gods! good Gods! give me, Oh! give me *Portia*!

Give me but her, and cast your Crowns and Glory,

Victory and Fame to the poor busie Slaves,
That wou'd be great, with her I wou'd sit down,
In peaceful and unenvy'd Poverty,
Above the anxious Greatness of Renown.

Por. O ! all ye Heav'nly Powers ! that fixt this World,
With the Cement of Universal Love,
Why is such tender Passion not your Care ?
Such Virtue, and such Truth by all forsaken ?
Can you view Mortal Joys with envious Eyes ?
Or grudge the scanty Riv'lets of our Pleasures,
Amidst such Torrents of surrounding Wo !
Ah ! no --- 'tis I ; 'tis my contagious Fate,
'Tis curst I have ruin'd my poor *Marian* !
O ! that I rather never had been born !
Or scalded o're with frightful Leprosies,
Wrinkl'd with Age, and loath'd Deformities.

Mar. Accuse not Heav'n, nor curse thy Beauteous Form !
My Crimes alone have made me thus unhappy.

Por. And can'st thou love me still ? after the Sufferings,
That I have cost thee ? —

Mar. ----- Sure thou dost not doubt it. ----
Love thee still ? ----- Yes, by my dearest Hopes !
Thy very Name yields Joy ; thy Talk darts Raptures,
An oh ! thy self ----- oh ! 'tis not to be spoke !
'Tis mighty extasie beyond unfolding.
Heav'n is most just, withholds thee from my Arms,
Because it sees I've not deserv'd thee yet.

Por. Alas, thy Love restores my tainted Blood,
Or sees not the black Crimes it has admitted !

Mar. What canst thou mean ? thy frightful Words, and Gesture,
Cast a chill shivering Horror o're my Soul.

Por. Perhaps thou know'st it not ----- the guilty Shame
Confound me. I cannot utter it -----

Mar. If it be ought that does concern my Love,
That threatens that, delay not to inform me,
If not, all other Ills are Forraign things,
And give no Pain.

Por. Must I then tell my Shame ?

Mar. Ha ! thy Shame ! what wou'd these dreadful Words,
Tainted Blood, black Crimes and guilty Shame !
Nay, thy Shame too, ha ! --- Gods, I shall grow wild
With gasty doubts. with strange, with shocking Fears !
Art thou infected with thy Sexes Frailties ?
False to thy Vows ? --- thy numerous Vows and Oaths ?
Impossible ! Answer me, --- Can this be ?
This is too much, too much, relentless Pow'rs
Makes me fall out with Providence, and think

That We're abus'd with Maxims of your Goodness!
This is not Just--- I cannot, will not bear it,-----

Per. O! have but Patience.

Mar. I've all th' extent of patient Sufferance.
Can bear th' Insults of the tumultuous People,
The Savage Fury of a Tyrant's Will;
Not all the threatening Hurricane of Heav'n,
Nor the right Hand of dreadful thundering Jove,
Nor shou'd the Frame of Nature burst asunder,
And crush us all to Atoms, wou'd it move me.
But this is worse than Poverty, Disgrace,
Exile, Diseases, Rods, Axes, or Distruction.
O end me, end me, quickly Gods, least I
Blasphe'me, and doubt your Beings. Ah!
Blast me with Lightning; throw me down,

Per. But ah! my Brother! your loving Friend *Aurelian*!

Mar. What of him?

Per. Ah! he is false! could'st thou think it.
Urg'd me to falsehood too, indeed he did:
Courted the Tyrant with most Servile Flattery,
To build his Fortune upon *Martian's* Ruins.
Calm this loud Tempest, thy Mistake has rais'd,
Or see me perish in thy Sight this moment!

Mar. O! thou hast Pow'r to sooth unruly Frenzy,
Yes, I will hear you, though you Damn me farther.

Per. Oh! that I love thee *Martian*, with all the Force
Of Purity and Truth, be Witness Heav'n!
And ev'ry awful Pow'r bend down and hear,
While in the fond Abundance of my Heart,
I swear, I love thee more than Health, or Life,
Than Liberty, or wish'd for Peace of Mind
Next to my Countrys good, and my own Honour!

Mar. O charming Words! O extase of Sound!
How it expands my Soul with mighty Joy!
So when the thundring Drum, and Trumpets Clangor,
The Horses Neighing, and the Soldier's Shouts,
Rouse me to Battle with a Godlike Rage,
The noble Fire extends my Heart, and Bounds,
Through all my Veins, and I am Ardor all,
Tumultuous Transport, and Immortal Fury.
I have offended *Porcia* by my Doubts,
But Oh! my Love, I swear thou art reveng'd,
Ixions's Wheel, and old *Prometheus* Vulture,
And all the various Tortures of the Damn'd,
Are sure much less than mine was. But my Fair,
Since thou art true, no matter who is false.

[*Pauses.*]

What say'st thou now? am not I infected?
Spotted all o're; a part of me has wrong'd thee.

Mar. No, thou art white, and pure as Innocence!
He is no part of thee; nor of thy Kin,
Born of some Slave, and palm'd upon thy Parents,
The filthy product of some Courtier's Lust,
And in Hypocrisie has outdone his Sire.
I knew his Treachery, and had forgot it
Name him no more, the horrid Thought distracts me,
And quite inverts the Orders of my Soul.
For Oh! he'd wound himself about my Heart,
With all the noble Bonds of sacred Friendship,
That it has cost me strange stupendious Pangs,
To rend him from it---- but he's gone, and
May all the Curses he invok'd light on him.

Per. Ha! I hear a noise! fly my gentle Love,

[*A Noise at
a distance*

Flye far from *Rome*; Oh! fly this Den of Thieves!
I charge you by your Love, make haste away;
I had thus long in Joy forgot thy Danger:
You are not safe, this is the Seat of Ruffians,
Informers, Sycophants. Here the Brother
Trusts not the Brother, nor the Son the Father.
Or if they do, they're certainly deceiv'd.
All Tyes of Trust and Confidence are ceas'd.

Mar. I must not leave thee then in such Contagion,
But thou must with me ———

Per. More willingly, than
With a Guardian God: but how is't possible?

Mar. All's possible
To love like thine, and mine, — I'll force my way
Thro' the thin Guard.

Per. That will but arm the Court against thy Life.

Mar. What is the Court? the mean enervate Court?
There's not the Soul of one brave Man among 'em,
They love themselves too well, to seek out Danger;
I am thy Soldier, and this Arm shall make 'em
Keep awful distance, while I bear thee through 'em.

Per. Thy Love and Courage will not see the Hazard,
But I alas! ——— yet I will with my Love,
To dye with thee is next to living with thee:

—— But oh! my Fears,
I hear the Noise again, Doors op'ning, the steps
Of some in haste, ah! clap on thy Disguise,
Or I shall dye with dreadful Apprehension! (*He claps it on.*)

Mar. Fear not my Love, thou must be Heaven's chief care,
And for thy Virtue they will spare thy *Martian*.

For. See 'tis the Empress!

Enter Empress.

Emp. ——— Who have you here?
For I've important Business with you *Porcia*,
That near concerns your Happiness and mine.

Per. This, *Madam*, is an honest faithful Slave,
Whom I am sending to my exil'd Lord.

Emp. Will you not go your self then?

Por. ——— Did I know how,
Swift as the Wind, with all the speed of Fear.

Emp. That I design'd to tell you, when I found
My Emperor with you; but then you know,
My Love, Desire, and Hope, made me pursue him,
But since I cou'd not find him; I'm return'd,
To beg thee, if thou hast Pity, Love, or Virtue,
As much thou seem'st to have, to fly him strait.
I cannot rest while you are here thus near him.
For ah! his Wit, his soft deluding Tongue
Will melt thee else to an abhor'd Compliance.
Oh! he is perfect in betraying Wiles;
Knows every subtle passage to the Heart,
And all the wondrous force of pointed Looks,
Can thaw the Icy Bosome of a Vestal,
Though for the Sin she's sure to suffer Death.
Oh! what cannot his cunning Arts perform,
Perswade the Miser from his hoarded Gold;
Active Ambition into languid Ease;
And ev'n the Priesthood into humble Honesty.
Fly therefore fly, the dear Destruction fly,
For if you stay, your Virtue surely dyes.

Per. Not that I doubt my Virtue, I wou'd fly,
But my Soul, still languishes to *Martian*,
With most impetuous Ardor! — Oh! shew me
But how I shall get to him.

Emp. 'Tis thus:
I have procur'd a pious Vestal Virgin,
Who will convey thee safe to *Vesta's* Temple,
And thence find Means to get you out of *Rome*;
She waits us now in a lone Gallery?
To which I will by secret Doors conduct you,
That come not near your Guards-----

Per. You hear, *Cleander*, where you soon may find me,
Go to my Lord, and let him know the Joy,

'Twill

'Twill ease his throbbing Heart, and cure his Grievs.
He'll bless the Gods, that when no help was hop'd,
Sent kind Relief to Vertue in Distress.

Mar. Madam, I will, and may the Pow'rs above,
Crown all the Pious Empresses Desires ! (Exit.

Emp. Come gentle Portia, use the present Hour,
The next, perhaps, may not be in our Pow'r.

(Exit Ambo.

SCENE II.

A Gallery in the Pallace.

Enter Perennius, and Lætus in a Vestal Virgins Habit.

Peren. THIS is the place the Empress order'd us
To wait her in : But I must not be seen.

(Is going.

Gods ! what sudden Trembling's this, that shakes me ?
My Nerves forsake rheir Office, my Knees knock ;
Faintness and Shiv'ring chills my Heart !

Læ. 'Tis the surprize of near approaching Joy,
That, like a Mid-night Larum in a Camp,
Starts all your Faculties into Confusion :
They'll soon into their ancient order fall,
And bear you bravely to the noble Onset.

Per. I hope they will-Hark ! a Noise ! 'Tis the Door,
I will before, to give you timely Notice,
If ought approach, bring her through the back Court ;
'Tis most remote and safe.

Læ. — Be gon, I will.

[Exit Peren.

The Door opens, the Empress and Portia enter with a Candle, Lætus goes to 'em.

Empress. O ! Here's the pious Priestess that conducts you,
To her, and to the Gods I must commend you.
And if the Wishes of a Wretch, like me,
Will ought avail, may they convey you safe,
To him you love, and make your Exile easie !

Per. Opinion is the God that makes us happy.
And where my *Martian* is, I must be so ;

The Roman Brides Revenge.

For he is Country, Friends, and all to Me.

Lar. Madam, this Light must out, or back with you. [*To the Empress.*]

Por. What in the Dark?

Lar. The Light will discover us.

The Moon's kind Beams will do our business best.

Por. And will you gentle Virgin bring me safe

Lar. To *Vesta's* Temple, and from thence to *Martian*!

It is cur. Duty to assist th^e unhappy.

Por. It were Impiety, indeed, to doubt

The highest Holy Ministers of Heav'n.

Lar. Nothing but Fear, and Noise, and worse delay

Can disappoint your Happiness!

Emp. *Portia* farewell, may Heav'n reward thy Virtue!

Por. And yours the Emperor (*Exit with Larus.*)

Emp. Oh! that he would!

It is not in Heav'n's Pow'r to bless me more.

But I'll go seek him out; and with fresh Tears

Melt his hard Heart, dissolve it into Love;

And in the Flames, that all my Bosome Fires

Consume his wandring Wishes and Desires.

(*Exit at the Door, and flouts it after her.*)

Enter Emperor with Attendants and Lights.

Emp. It was not well to leave her in Despair;

I might have giv'n at least some doubtful Hope.

[*Pause.*]

I swear her tender Love was strongly moving!

And she is fair, by Heav'n! yes, wordrous fair!

And must be lov'd by all the World but me;

But I am doom'd to odd Fantastic Madness;

To doat on Pride, and vain affected Virtue,

That spurns me from her, and disdains my Love.

While I avoid the willing Charms that Court me.

But I will shake thy Chains off, cruel *Portia*,

And in my Empress's downy Arms forget thee.

Why dost thou fix thy beauteous Hand upon me?

Tear out my Heart, yet by the Gods I'll leave thee;

Gentle *Valeria* in her Breast shall shield me

From the impetuous fury of thy Eyes.

Oh!

(*Groans.*)

Like a poor Wretch upon his Feavourish Bed,

I tofs, and tumble; turn from side to side,

And yet no easie posture can I find,

The raging Calenture still burns within. (*Seems to muse.*)

Enter

The Roman Brides Revenge.

27

Enter Perennius at a distance.

Per. Now Curses on ill Luck! the Doors are fast,
Through which we shou'd have made our wish'd escape.
They must come this way back.—Ha! the Emperor. *(Seeing him)*
Hell and Furys all's lost, what must be done? *(Stands.)*

Emp. Well, I will to her; dry her falling Tears,
Lock her within my burning Arms, and swear
Never to see her fatal Rival more.

Peren. It must be so.—this *Lætus* is unlucky;
His Head designs well, but he has no Fortune,
And I still loose by vent'ring on his Bottom.
This Dagger, as he enters, shall secure me,
For yet this Secret is between us two:
And see they come.

Enter Lætus and Portia.

Læt. Dispond not, Madam, all will yet be well.

Per. Ay, when this Dagger has transfixt thy Heart. *(Stabs him.)*

Læt. *As he falls.* } Ha! slain by thee! Villain, Dog! but I deserve it. *(Dies.)*

Per. *(Aside.)* Dye quickly then, or else 'twill do no good.
Hold Madam, hold, I must secure you,
For the Emperor. Lights there *Portia*, Treason!
Portia is flying. *(Aloud to Portia, who shrieks at Lætus's fall, and is running back.)*

Emp. Ha! what say'st thou,
That Sound has ruin'd all my best Resolves! *(Runs to her.)*
Whither is she Flying! whither, and with whom?

Per. That Sir, I can't yet tell, but this will shew me. *(Takes a Light and looks at Lætus.)*

Emp. Go instantly and seize the heedless Guards,

Per. O ye good Gods, Sir, if it be't Religion
That has conspir'd against your Happiness!

(Seems to look no e earnestly at Lætus with the Light, kneeling down to the Body.)

Emp. Throw her vile Body to the hungry Dogs!

Per. Ha! what is't I see! sure my Eyes must Err!
It is impossible! it cannot be!

What *Lætus*! my Friend! Death to my Repose!
The honest *Lætus* slain by this curs'd Hand!
Was this the kind return of all thy Friendship?
This the best Gift *Perennius* cou'd bestow?

Emp. How's this! bemoan the Traytor in my hearing?

Per. Pardon me Emperor, if I pay these Tears,

To

To one that lov'd me better than himself:
 He was my Friend, my faithful honest Friend,
 At least, I thought him so; the best good Man,
 The plainest open Virtue, I e'er met with.
 That, and his zealous Love for you, my Lord,
 Won my Heart, for I've heard him swear,
 He'd dye a thousand Deaths for your least Pleasure.
 But oh! I find (alas! that he shou'd prove it)
 The fairest Tongues oft hide the foulest Hearts;
 And noisie Zeal conceals the Traytors ends.
 Yet, if he did dissemble—

Emp.

If he did?

Why, is't not plain, art not thou witness of it?

Per. 'Tis true, my Sov'raign, and the Avenger too.
 He from my Hand deserv'd to meet his Fate,
 That durst impose upon my honest Nature,
 And wrong the best of Masters, and his Friend.

Per. Bleis me, Sir, a Man! what is't a Man?

Emp. A Man, Madam, yes, a young handsom Man!
 I find your boasted Virtue's of a piece,
 With that of all the rest of your frail Sex;
 A cunning Blind, to put off them you like not,
 And to secure your sport with thole you fancy.
 Yet tell me, foolish Fair, how cou'd'st thou choose
 This groveling Vassal, and refuse his Lord?

Per. O! base *Valeria*! cou'd'st thou fall so low,
 From all thy shining Virtue, to Revenge
 So mean, and so ungenerous as this!

Emp. Ha, *Valeria*, didst thou say the Empress?
 Didst thou not name *Valeria*? speak.

Per. Yes, and though I disdain thy poor Reflections,
 Yet since my Honour claims the Truth, I'll speak.
 It was the Empress that betray'd me to him,
 With the false Hopes of flying to my Love.
 I knew no other, than his Habit promis'd.
 Through a blind Door she led me to this place,
 And with dissembl'd Pity took her leave.

Per. O! horrid Treachery, that she cou'd do so!

Emp. *Valeria*, this low sordid Deed has still'd
 All kind Designs of growing pity for thee.
 And *Portia*'s mightier Beauties now resume,
 And fix their Empire in my Heart for ever.

Per. O, Sir, relaps not from such just Designs.
 Howe'er the Empress meant to ruin me,
 'Twas but the bad effect of too much Love.
 You have no cause of anger at her Fault,
 Since 'twas for you, only for you, she did it.

Emp.

Emp. Excuse her not, she knew you Innocent !
And therefore I must hate detest, and loath her.

Per. What have I done, now Curses on my Tongue !
'Twas forg'd, and false, on purpose to abuse you !

Emp. That cannot be, you knew not this by Door.
Come plead not for her, nor against my Passion.
For I'm all Fire, all Wild, and furious Love.
And by a Witchery most strange, and odd,
I love, and burn for, what obstructs my Hopes.
Perennius take my *Portia* to thy charge ;
The Morning's Dawn shall make her Beauties mine.
Mean while, I will divorce me from *Valeria*,
And drive her out of the Imperial Pallace.

Per. O hear me Sir, I beg you, on my Knees. *(Kneels.)*

Emp. I will not hear one word upon that Subject,
But fly to punish thy ignoble Wrongs. *(Exit.)*

Per. Punish 'em on thy self then brutal Tyrant !
I have no Enemies, no Wrongs, but thee,
Thou art the hatred Source of ail my Wrongs.
O ! ye great Gods, we're taught that you are just,
Why sleeps your Thunder then ? why are your Bolts
Spent upon Trees, Mountains, and idle Deserts,
And never reach this Butcher of Mankind ?
This old Oppressor of Innocence and Virtue !
Let 'em reach him, or me, I care not which,

Per. Go fetch a Gaurd. *(To the Servant left with him.)*

Per. But Heav'n is deaf as him to all my Prayers.
I will not bear't, O ! but for Poysons, Daggers,
Any kind ready way to fly to Death !

Per. Madam, you spend your balmy Breath in vain,
He hears you not, or if he did can't pity,
That wou'd destroy the Fund of all his Hopes.
I own, I pity you, and if I durst---

Per. What wou'dst thou do ? for 'tis impossible
A Minister of his shou'd e're do good.

Per. You're too severe, to censure all for him.
'Tis true, my Fortune tyes me to him fast,
Nay, I in Gratitude must own do love him.
Yet I approve not all his cruel Deeds.
No, by the Gods, my Soul is made so tender,
Each mournful Object melts it ev'n to Tears.
What Pains, Diseases, Racks cou'd ne'er wrest from me,
Behold your Suff'rings, Madam, now extort !

(Seems to weep.)

Per. 'Tis wondrous strange--- how cou'dst thou ever please him.

Per.

Per. Princes like Fortune, often blindly raise
The Objects of their Power without thinking.

Per. And canst thou pity, and not resolve Redress?

Per. Were I a God, for this I'd prize my Godhead,
That I cou'd help the Wretched without Danger;
But as I am a Man, the Emperor's Slave,
I forfeit Wealth, and Life, by such a Deed.

Por. Can generous pity dwell within your Breast,
And yet not dare to do a dangerous Good?
O! if you e're have felt the Pangs of Love,
And all the Longings of oppos'd Desire,
I do conjure you by your Hopes to free me.

Per. That Conjuraton quite disarms my Fears,
And fills my Heart with a most noble Daring.
For I do love, and in that very manner.

Enter Guards.

But see the Guards, I now must say no more.
Here, conduct her to my Apartment --

(They carry her off.)

This was a dexterous turn of my Wit,
That like the friendly Hand of some kind God,
Snatch'd me from off the very brink of Ruin,
And here has thrown the Prize into my Bosom!
Fortune has yet but blest my Hopes by halves;
Held out the glittering Cup of Joys brim full,
Then dash'd it on the Ground, ev'n at my Lips.
But now I'll hold the fickle Goddess fast;
Grasp bright Occasion by the foremost lock,
And use the lucky hours she hast lent me.
Portia shall win me to her hop'd escape.
Till I have train'd her to the lonely Grotto,
That will drown all her Crys, and Woman's Skreams.
And when I have reveng'd me on her Beauties,
With my best Jewels, I will fly from Rome.
'Tis but the Scene of Pleasure to remove,
No Exile can be worse than hopeless Love.

(Exit.)

The End of the Third ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I

Under the Pallace Garden Wall.

Enter Martian in his own Habit.

Mar. I Waited the Extent of all my Patience
At *Vesta's* Temple for her promis'd Coming,
And yet she came not! Night now wears apace;
'Tis not two Hours to Morn; O! scanty Time!
For the important Business of my Life!
O! Sun! yet rest within thy Wavy Bed,
And stop the fiery Steeds of hastning Day!
And thou, O Night! yet spread thy dusky Wings,
To lull Mankind from their injurious Cares;
There will be time enough for busie Men,
To ruin, and supplant each others Fortune.
But ah! for me, for Virtue in Distress,
'This only Night, of all Times gloomy row!
Is left, mark'd out for Safety.

I sent *Cleander* too, to learn the Cause
Of *Portia's* Stay; and told him he shou'd find me
Impatient here beneath this Garden Wall.
How tedious is Delay to Men in Pain!

Enter Cleander from the Garden.

O! Art thou come? Where does my *Portia* stay?
Is she alive? Is she well? Is she safe?
Answer with speed, for in thy drooping Looks
I read Disorder, that almost distracts me.

Cle. She was, Sir, intercepted in her Flight;
Perennius guards her till the Morning,
And then she is to wed the Emperor;
Not one is suffer'd to come near th'Appartment.
The Empress too's divorc'd, and driven with Shame
From Court, ev'n now, the Cause I cou'd not learn

Mar. The Cause! the Cause is wondrous plain, *Cleander* —
But by the Gods he shall not have his Will,
While I have Life. No, were he guarded round
With Hydra's, flaming Chymera's, blasting Furies,
And all the Terrors of his Native Hell,
Yet I wou'd through 'em force my horrid way,
And with this Sword revenge my Love, and *come*. [Is going.]

Clean. Stay, Sir, and think — [stopping of him] to certain Death you go.

Mar. Death! What is Death? Is Death to be avoided?
 Why shou'd I shun that Sabbath to my Labours?
 That Boundary of Fortune's stormy Pow'r?
 Death is the honest Friend that I wou'd find,
 That flatters none, but with an equal Foot
 Enters the Cottage, and the gilded Pallace.

Clean. I fear not Death — shou'd Joy to dye with You —
 Yet when Chance offers fair for your Relief,
 'Twould be meer Frenzy to thro' Life from us.

Mar. What dost thou mean? What Hopes, or what Relief
 Hast thou in View? for I, alas! see none.

Clean. The Lodgings of *Perennius* face the Garden,
 And from his Windows *Portia* may escape
 With ease, there are no Guards on that Side:
 The Garden Doors are open too, through which
 I will with speed convey a Ladder to you.

Mar. Fly then, fly quickly, with a Lovers Haste,
 Beneath those Windows thou wilt find thy Master,
 Impatient of thy least Delay — Be gone.

[*Exeunt severally; the Scene opens into a
 Garden; the Pallace at a distance; Mar-
 tian goes in at the Garden Door.*]

Enter Portia alone.

Por. I wou'd not stay for my Deliverer,
 Cou'd I tell how to get from out this place:
 For tho' with gen'rous Care he let me down,
 Yet sure so near a Favourite of a Tyrant,
 That's only sway'd, by Cruelty and Lust,
 Must move, by more ignoble Springs than Pity!
 His Words too bore a dark and doubtful Meaning;
 His Eyes, at mention of Trust in him,
 Sparkled with Fire, while his mantling Blood
 Flush'd o're his Face; he grasp'd me too with Ardor,
 As on the Window he set me in the Chair.
 Good Gods, direct me in this dangerous Course,
 Betwixt this *Scylla*, and that wild *Charibdy*!
 On both Sides worse than Death, and in the midst
 All is uncertain; horrid Darkness all!
 Hark! a Noise! and this way it approaches! [A Noise,
 I tremble at each Tree and Bush, for fear
 It shou'd be some Court Villain. Yet must on;
 Perhaps from hence some Outlet I may find,
 By wandering round. O! grant ye Powers I do,
 For here is nought but Death, or foul Dishonour! [Exeunt

Enter

Enter from the other Side the Emperor, Attendance, Lights, Music.

Emp. That is the Window, place your selves beneath it,
And charm my Goddess with your humble Lays.
The Force of Music, and the Pow'r of Numbers,
May break the Icy spell that chills her Heart
Against the pressing Beams of warmer Love.

Music and Song.

(1.)

IF Cælia you had Youth at Will,
And long cou'd board the fleeting Treasure,
You might be Coy and Cruel still,
And yet a-while delay your Pleasure:
But your Youth is swiftly flying,
And your Charms will soon be dying;
And then you'll use inviting Acts in vain,
Your Love will give no Joy, your Scorn will give no pain.

(2.)

The faded Lustre of your Eyes
Will then alas! no more surprize us,
When every Charm in Ruin lies,
Your Face, and not your Will denies us.
Use your Time then, use the Blessing;
Lose no Hour without possessing:
For when the first tumultuous Bliss is past,
It leaves a grateful Joy, that will for ever last.

Enter Servants, forcing in Portia.

Por. O Gentlemen, if your Minds know pitty;
If you had Mothers that had any Virtue,
Force me not to the hated Tyrants Prefence!
1. Nay, Madam, you shall to the Emperor.
2. Finding this Lady flying her speed we thought betray'd some guilt,
And therefore we have brought her to your Majesty.

Emp. You have done well. O where is the base Slave,
That durst betray this high, importunate Trust?
For I will plunge him in abhor'd Disgrace.

Por. Unlucky Maid, still to undo thy Friend!

Emp. What froward Maxims, Madam, make you fly
From Empire, Glory, and pursuing Love?

Por. Ah! Strange Excess of thy inhumane Rage;
That when thou'st left me nothing but my Woe,
Wilt not permit me to enjoy ev'n that,
But dash the wretched Pleasure with thy Love.

Emp. Why so averse to Joy? so fond of Sorrow?
Life is a curious Web, by Nature wrought,
Fine to the Eye, but torn by e'ry Chance;
You burst its tender Threads with Pond'rous Grief,
And shun the downy Pleasures it will bear.

Por. Pleasure from thee!

Emp. From me? Yes, by the Gods;
Soft flowing Pleasures of brisk Wit and Love;
Ingrateful Fair, I wou'd disperse those Clouds,
That gather round thy Morning Sun of Life,
And thou with a false Pride, dost spurn me from thee.

Por. Wer't thou Victorious, Brave, as the first *Cæsar*,
I cou'd not love; but as thou art, I loath thee
More than the vilest Slave in thy poor Empire.

Emp. When Pow'r submits to beg it shou'd be so,
But Love impos'd false Medicines for my Cure;
Thy Insolence now frees me from the Cheat.

I've not forgot I am thy Emperor;
That thou art made the Subject of my Pleasure,
Yes, I will rush into thy struggling Arms,
In all the Rage of my Tempestuous Love,
And sieze the Joys by Force, I ask'd in vain. [Embraces her.]

Por. { O Gods, defend me from the Tyrant's Lust;
Aside. { I must against the Dictates of my Heart,
Sooth him with Hope, to gain some Time for Help.

The surest Means to gain a Womans Heart,
Is to convince her that you truly love her,
Which I must doubt, if you attempt my Honour.
Force is th' Effect of Fondness, of your Ease,
That shuns the Pain of surer Arts to please;
Beauty is bought by tender Vows and Sighs,
You rob, if you deny to pay its Price.

Emp. Have I not sigh'd & breath'd a thousand Vows,
Yet nought have gain'd by all my Fruitless Pain,
But haughty Slights, Disdain, and vile Affronts.

Por. Consider, Sir, my Soul's too full of Grief,
Suffers too much by an unhappy Love,
To taste another Passion yet, give Time
For in a little Time I may be free
To view your Love with a more equal Eye.

Emp. My Love's too fierce to brook the least Delay,
I will consume thy anxious Love in Mine,
Whose Beamy Sunshine ne're can be obscur'd,
With rising Clouds of Sadness or Misfortune,
Here thou wilt find no Tears, no Sighs, but such
As fan the Air, and gently leave the Breasts
With struggling Pleasure, and Excess of Joy;
Whispering Murmurs, and Eternal Billing.

Our Coo's shall be more piercing than the Turtles ;
I'll clasp thee to me, and I'll twine about thee
Closer then Ivy, or the curling Vine,
We'll mix like Waters, till we lose Distinction.

Por. If all my Sufferings cannot move your Heart,
Think upon Hell, the Wheel and Rowling Stone,
Unheard of Woe, that Fancy cannot paint ;
A Tyrant's Hell too is the dismal Centre,
Where all the Lines of Circling Tortures meet.

Emp. Mistaken Fair, here is the Hell you threat ;
No *Tantalus* dreads the loose impending Rock ;
No *Tyrtius* lies extended o'er the Plain ;
The Eternal Food of Birds in Hell. But here
Vain Biggots Fears the Cares of busie Men,
And Lovers Pangs create the uneasie Torments ;
But I will burst the Chain that holds me down,
And with resolute Fury scale my Heaven. *[Embraces, and offers to
kiss and ruffle her.]*

Enter Martian.

Mar. The gloomy Night has put new Darkness on ;
And led by some strange Fate, I wander round,
And cannot find the well known Lodgings out.

Por. Stand off, unhand me, thou first-born of Hell ;
Thou Blot of Nature, thou Crime of Providence,
Thou Sum and Extract of all, that is most loathsome !

Mar. Ha ! my *Portia*, in the Hands of Ravishers ! *[Martian draws,
and runs at the Emperor, is
intercepted by the Guards.]*
Villain, forbear my Love.

Emp. What ! is it thou ? thou art a daring Rebel ;
But I'll deal with thee as thy Crimes deserve.
Go drag him hence to the *Turpeian* Rock ;
Dash him to pieces ; shall I ne're have Rest
For Traytors ?

Mar. O *Portia* ! O farewell, for ever !

Por. O dismal Sound ! for ever ?

Mar. For ever !

Por. Sure, there are Joys above for suffer'ing Virtue :
There we shall meet again ; my Soul will know thee :

It is so full of thee, I'll not stay long ;

Indeed I won't, but reach thee in thy Flight.

O Heaven ! O Earth ! and thou, O *Neptune*, hear me,

And fix eternal Racks upon my Soul,

If I out-live my *Martian* many Minutes.

Emp. Must I speak in vain ? drag him away.

Mar. Oh ! my Love, farewell.

Por. Ah ! this is worse than Death *[They force him out ; she Faints]*
*[While they're employ'd about Portia, Perennius
enters at the upper end of the Walk.]*

Peren.

Peren. Now curse on Business, that must thus intrude,
 When I shou'd feast my self with *Portia's* Beauties,
 Yet this is of a Nature, that new arms me
 Against the other Fears that check'd my Love.
 Th'Army mutining, and just entring *Rome*,
 I led on by *Aurelian*,
 Must be the Emperor's Downfall, and mine with him.
 Since that is sure, I'll make my Joys as sure;
 Grasp first the Treasure of this charming Majd,
 Then fly with Speed from the black gathering Storm.

Emp. So, she revives; —

Go bear her gently to *Valeria's* Lodgings,
 And bid her Maids prepare her for my Love,
 I'll not defer my Marriage or Enjoyment. *[They bear her off.]*

Per. Ha! What's this? — do my Eyes and Ears deceive me?
 Is *Portia* snatch'd again from my Embrace?

Fate presses so from every side upon me,
 I have no Time for Thought—*[pauses]* I must excuse
 Her Flight, nor yet inform him of his Danger,
 Least his Despair shou'd but augment his Rage,
 Beyond my Power to calm, My Lord.

Emp. *Perennius!*

Ingrateful Slave, how durst thou tempt my Fury,
 Ev'n in the guilty Moment?

Per. 'Tis true, my Sov'reign;
 If by appearance we shou'd judge of things,
 There is too just a Cause for your Dread Anger;
 But my dear Master —

Emp. No more of thy false Wiles to blind my Eyes,
 The Veil is off that hid the cunning Villain,
 That cou'd betray me, and let my *Portia* go:
 Seize him, if he resists you, kill him.

Per. Come on, I'll not fall tamely by the Tyrant *[To the Guards]*
 O that invenerate Arm shou'd miss thy Life! *[Perennius draws;*
 Yes, cursed Prince, I own the brave Design; *runs at the Empe-*
 I was thy Rival, and bright *Portia's* Lover; *ror; is stabb'd by*
 And let her go, to rise all her Sweets, *the Guards.*
 Surfeit on Joy, for one immortal Moment.
 But Fortune mock'd me with a hop'd Success.
 O that she wou'd thee too! nay, well I know it.
Aurelian comes soon, to revenge me on thee;
 The more to blast thy fancy'd Pleasures know;
Valeria was imposed on by my Arts;
 And knew not *Latus*, more than *Portia* did;
 By that Device I thought to bear her off;
 Then drew fond *Latus*, to secure my Love;

For some more lucky Hour, but in vain —
 My Life is on the Wing, — so Curses on thee; —
 Thou wilt not be behind me long. — Oh! [*Dies.*]
Emp. D'y'e thou Prophetic Dog! — [*Spurns him*]
 What can the dying Villain mean? Revenge,
Aurelian; — 'tis no matter what —
 Fate must fly swiftly, to prevent my Joy;
 And that once gain'd, she can but half destroy. [*Exit.*]

Enter Empress alone.

Empress. Ah! wretched me, I've drain'd my Eyes of Tears,
 But not my Heart of Woe! that's still fixt here:
 No Complaints can move it, and no Sighs redress!
 Tho' banish'd hence from my dear cruel Lord;
 My Treacherous Feet will still pursue his Steps;
 I've sought the Garden round, and cannot find him,
 What can I do, or whither can I turn?
 Horror, Despair on e'ry Side besiege me!
 Death — 'tis Death that only can relieve me; [*Pauses.*
 Yes, I will die; — my Fondness does deserve it — [*Pauses*
 To love beyond such Sights. — but shall I die
 Thus tamely? — Yes — What! thus? thus unreveng'd? [*Pauses*
 Ah! yes, that Death best suits my tender Love.
 Ha! there he goes; my Heart bounds at the sight,
 And strikes a Transient Joy all o're my Soul!
 I'll follow him, and die within his Arms;
 He'll pity sure his bleeding Victims Groans;
 Perhaps may kiss my pale and breathless Lips;
 May wish he'd been more kind, and I more happy. [*Exit.*]

Scene changes to Portia's Apartment.

Enter Portia, and her Maid Crispina.

Crisp. Why are you, Madam, obstinate in Woe,
 And shun the Indulgence of a Smiling Fortune,
 For a vain Love, and Fruitless Constancy?
Rome courts you for her Empress, and your Prince
 Dies at your Feet, with most unfeigned Desires.

Por. No more, — I will not hear my Love blasphem'd. —
 Is this a time to urge the impious Cause!
 For oh the Tyrants Ministers of Murder,
 Perhaps this Minute butcher my poor Love.
 Ha! dreadful Image of my certain Woe;

[*Pauses, and fixes her
 Looks on one place.*]
 What?

What horrid Scene is this, thou dost present me?
 See — where he lies, stretch'd out upon the Floor:
 His noble Limbs hack'd by that Cut-throat Villain!
 See if that Coward does not pierce his Bosom,
 Where his brave Heart dwells, that abhor'd a Coward
 See from the gaping Wounds, the Purple Flood
 Rowls like a Torrent down his mangled Body,
 And in it his great Soul: Ha! Paleneis! Death!
 Oh! Horror! Horror! Horror! Poisons! Daggers!
 Dispatch me quickly, ere the Tyrant comes
 To dragg to's polluted Nuptial Rites.

Ah! my dear *Martian*! stay for thy dying *Portia*;
 Beat the Wing awhile, and I'll be with you.

Crif. How strange Imagination works upon her!

Por. Oh! oh! — [*groans*] Lo! now I come [*faints away*]

Crif. Help here quickly, help; the Empress faints.

[*Enter several Women, and run to her; endeavour to receive her.*]

So she recovers, — — stand off, and give her Air.

Por. Be gone, — — and let me die, — I will not live; —

Why did you rouse me from this Golden Vision!

Of *Martian*, triumphing *Martian*, and endless Love?

Crif. Let not the anxious Dreams of Fancy rack you;

What boot your Pangs, your Fury, or Laments?

They can't revoke his Sufferings, nor your Doom;

The Emperor loves too much, to quit you ever.

You had better, Madam, seem to like the Fate;

You can't avoid.

Por. I will not answer thee — —

But loose my self in kind distracting Thought.

Portia, thy Name shou'd now inspire thy Love,

And make it struggle to some Godlike Act. [*pauses.*]

Brutus thy *Portia* set the great Example

To Roman Wives; which I a Bride will follow. [*pauses.*]

Ha! — sure some Heav'nly Beam informs my Mind;

Bears it above the common pitch of Glory,

To a brave Deed, that's singularly great!

Oh! bright Ambition of aspiring Virtue!

To what amazing Heights thou dost transport me!

For distant Ages to behold with Wonder!

No, my dear Lord,

Your *Portia* shan't survive you;

Nor will the tamely fall like helpless Woman,

But as resolv'd, and bold, as *Cato's* Daughter,

My Country's Genius, with my Love conspires,

To form the Vengeance for lost *Rome*, and *Martian*:

It shall be so — the Noble Thought revives me.

And shoots a pleasing Horror thro' my Soul.

The Roman Brides Revenge.

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Crisp. Strange Agonies are lab'ring in her Mind;
Betwixt Ambition and defeated Love;
I hope my wholesome Counsels will prevail,
And turn the Scale for the surviving Lover;
I'm sure I gain my Ends by that; to rise,
And shine, at Court among the foremost Beauties;
For mod'rate Charms will make a Figure there,
As well as mod'rate Honesty or Virtue.

Por. I must dissemble with this Servile Maid,
Afide. { Whose Eyes are dazled with approaching Grandeur,
To get the Means of my ador'd Revenge.

[To her] *Crispina*, you have said you lov'd me,
And seem to draw your Counsels from that Love;
Tell me then, and tell me truly too;
Is it not better die with him I love,
Than live with him, that loves but for a Day,
If he does love me.

Crisp. Doubt not your Charms, Madam;
For those will fix his wand'ring Heart for ever;
To dye! oh! 'tis a dreadful thing to die!
The old themselves, ev'n in that tasteless Age,
That crawl upon the barren part of Life;
All, on the horrid Precipice of Death,
Catch hold of ev'ry rootless seeming Stay,
That may defer awhile their certain Fall.
And shou'd Youth then, amidst its blooming Joys,
And all its lively force of Appetite,
Fly Life's full Feast, for hungry starving Death?
It is unnatural to the last degree.

Besides the learn'd themselves, I find, can't tell
What we are after Death, or that we are.
If we are not then, how can *Mortals* love you?
If his Love's ceas'd, why then shou'd yours survive?
In doubtful things, the Wife, the surer choose:
Th' Emperor lives in Glory, and in Love,
And he will make you great, as you are fair.

Por. Greatness indeed I own has many Charms;
When built on solid, not unfaithful Ground;
But 'tis a fleeting Greatness he presents:
Valeria lost it in one Rapid Month.

Crisp. I'm glad she will dispute it; for when *Woman*
Afide. Once parleys with her Constancy, 'tis gone.
[Aloud.] *Valeria*, Madam, is no Rule to you;
Th' Event has shew'd yours are the stronger Charms.

Por. Till the next taking Face shall come in view.
No, no, *Crispina*, I'm not yet for vain—
To think I can secure my Greatness so.
Yet I do know a way.—But oh! my Heart!

The Roman Brides Revenge.

How I am sliding from the heights of Virtue
Into the Abyss of the foul Tyrants Love.

Cris. Grant him a Tyrant, and a vile Oppressor;
O'tis a noble Task then for your Virtue,
To offer up your self, to mold this Tyrant
Into the generous Principles of Honour,
For your Countrys Good.

Por. That will prevail,
I fear, against the Force of all my Vows.

Cris. It must, it shall, it does.

Por. ——— Well, may I trust thee?

Cris. My Life, my Fortune, and my Heart, are yours.

Por. My Mother on her Death-bed did bequeath me

A noble Juice, the lasting Seal of Love;

With that, she fix'd my Father in his Faith,

Ev'n to his dying Hour: Here take this Key;

In th' inmost Drawer of my own Cabinet,

Thou'lt find it seal'd up in a gilded Viol:

Haste, and fetch it, that with the Magic Words,

Which I must use, I may drink it to him;

(For that's required to its sure Operation)

Ev'n in the sacred time of our Nuptials.

Cris. I will be back before the Rites begin.

Por. Be so, and now my lab'ring Soul's at ease;

And like a willing Victim I will go

To the bright Altar of Divine Revenge:

Heav'n for th' unhappy kindly took this Care

To place th' Asyle of Friendly Death, still near

To that Retreat, with eager Haste I'll fly;

I'm not entirely wretched, who dare die.

*The End of the Fourth ACT.**ACT V. SCENE I.**The Street near the Pallace.*

Enter Martian alone.

Mar. 'T Was not well done, to fly from my Preservers;

What tho' my Love, and good Cleander's Care,

Dragg'd me away from out the lucky Fight

That set me free, I should have lost occasion,

And dy'd with such brave Friends;

Well, I will back,

At least to know 'em; if I can't assist them.

Exit.

Enter Cleander.

[*Is going.*]

Clean. O which way, Sir — O whither are you going?

Mar. No more — I will not thus desert my Friends;
Such noble Friends, that snatcht me from Destruction
In Rome, almost within the Tyrants hearing.

Clean. Had I, Sir, known what since I have beheld,
I had not forc'd you from the doubtful Combate,
To pain your Soul with Tortures worse than Death.

Mar. What dost thou mean? thy Words, and frightful Looks
Import some strange Event; is *Portia* dead?
Has she outgon me in the Race of Love?

O wretched *Martian*, mean inglorious *Martian*;
To fly from Death, while *Portia* sought it out!

Clean. O Sir, she lives! is too well pleased with Life.

Mar. Ha!

Clean. This Minute, Sir, I saw her pass the Court;
Joy in her Face, and Pleasure in her Eyes,
To her black Nuptials with the *Emperor*.

Mar. What, *Portia*!

Clean. *Portia*.

Mar. My *Portia*?

Clean. Your *Portia*, Sir.

Mar. The softest Dear protesting vowing Maid,
That ever sooth'd a Doating Lover's Passion;
Can she be false?

Clean. Ev'n she is false;
She's caught the curst Contagion from her Brother;
And in the very Moment of your Death,
With Smiles and fond Caresses, weds your Butcher.

Mar. Impossible and false!

Clean. I'd not abuse her,
Nor you; I saw it; with these Eyes I saw it.

Mar. Thy Eyes deceiv'd thee then; for thou saw'st her
Dragg'd to the impious Bridals, all in Tears;
In struggling Agonies, in the Pangs of Death:
If she would live, ev'n to endure so much;
If thou saw'st *Portia*, 'twas thus that thou did'st see her:
Do I not know her strong Immortal Virtue?
Did she not swear that she would not outlive me?
And yet within an Hour wed my Murderer?
No more, lest thou provoke my lasting Hate.

Clean. I've done, Sir.

Mar. But art thou sure thou saw'st her?

Clean. I dare not, Sir, repeat it; for I fear,
More than my Death you hate.

Mar. Tell me, I say,

Art sure that it was her that thou didst see?

Clean. The Hall's now full of most amaz'd Beholders,
And in the Throng, disguis'd, you may see all;
If I have urg'd a falshood, ever hate me.

Mar. If this be so — O friendship, Love, farewell!
If this be so — where is the Wretch like me?
If this be so — but I'll not wrong her Virtue,
Nor Credit ought, but my own Eyes against her. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE II.

*A Magnificent Hall; the Emperor and Portia
in their Bridal Habits.*

Enter Martian and Cleander, disguised.

Emp. **L**ET every Trumpet, Flute, and Instrument
Of Music sound aloud; beat the big Drum,
And make the Echo of my Joys rebound
Up to the Vaulted Roof of Heav'n it self,
That all the Gods may Emulate my Pleasures;
While Portia drinks the Bridal Beverage. [*Portia drinks, having
first put something in the Bowl.*]

Emp. What did my Love mix in our Bridal Bowl?

Por. A Philtre, Sir, to fix your roving Heart:
Whose Magic Force will make you always mine.

Emp. Ha! give it me; for greedily I'll drink
The Noble Charm, by which I grow Immortal:
For to love always thus, is more than Godhead. [*Drinks it all off.*]

Mar. Oh Triumphant Falshood! O Excess of Woman!

Enter Empress, with her Hair dishevell'd, and her Bosom all bloody.

Emp. Where is the Emperor? where is my false Prince?
I cannot live, nor die away from him.
Oh! let me clasp thee in my fainting Arms;
Be not uneasy at my dying Fondness;
Indulge it now, indulge it, prithee do;
'Tis the last time it ever will offend thee.

Emp. Ha! *Valeria!*
What barbarous Hand has made this bloody Havock?

Emp. This, this, my Emperor, tho' it was too weak
To hold you there, cou'd execute your Hate:
Yet when I'm dead, as soon I find I shall be,
Prithee remember how *Valeria* lov'd thee;
Bore all thy Sights, thy Scorn, and thy hard Usage,
Sought no Revenge but on her injur'd self:

True, I complain'd of thy Ingrateful Falshood ;
But my Complaints arose from furious Love ;
The more I did complain, I lov'd thee more :
Pray'd to the Gods to guard the dear Destroyer,
And rather dy'd than you shoud be uneasy.

Emp. 'Tis sad, O Portia ; this is wond'rous sad !

Empr. Think then, oh! think ; does not such tender Love
Merit a kind place in your Remembrance ?
Ah! no--- if it be kind, it must torment thee :
Forget me rather ; O let be forgot,
Rather than give my Love one anxious Pang.

Emp. Ah my Valeria!

Empr. Ha! your Valeria? did you not call me yours?

Emp. I did, thou matchless Tenderness and Love.

Empr. And do you pity me?

Emp. By Heav'n I do.

Empr. It is enough, and now I die most happy :
O the fierce Joy so struggles in my Breast,
That all the Strings of Life now burst asunder.
O! I have lost you in surrounding Darkness!
O do not hate my Memory! this Kiss,
And this last dear Embrace; and now I'm---nothing. [dies

Empr. She's gon, --- the tender Mourner is no more ;
And like the Swans, her dying Notes so sweet,
They charm my Soul, and fix me here for ever.

Por. Ah! poor unhappy Princess, art thou dead?

Throwing off his Robes, and coming up to her. Yes, she is dead, false Portia, and thou living!
Slain, by thy Guilt she's dead! ---
Such Victims shoud be offer'd at such Rites.

Por. [starting] Ha! Martian!

Mar. Virtue and Truth, fond Tenderness and Love,
Shoud fall at Union of so foul a Pair.
Murder, Perjury, Oppression, Falshood,
Hypocrisie, Ingratitude, and all ;
All that can make ye both Supremely wicked,
Meet in ye. But your Impious Joys are short ;
For see this Sword shall end 'em in this Place. [Lays his Hand
on his Sword.

[Portia runs to Martian, and stops him.]

Por. Hold, Martian, hold, touch not the Emperor.
He's my Sacrifice.

Mar. Gods, she loves him too!

This whets my Rage, adds Fire to my Revenge! [The Emperor
starts from the Empress.

Emp. Ha! bold Assassins, in my very Pallace?
How came this Traytor to evade my Sentence!

Mar.

Mar. That I don't know The Gods it seems decreed it,
To torture me afresh with sight of thee,
And that false Maid.

Por. I will be justify'd.

Mar. 'Tis impossible — not a vile Prostitute,
That for a Drachma sells her common Favours
To the mean, greasie Refuse of the Vulgar,
Cou'd have done worse. O *Portia!* *Portia!*

Por. O *Martian, Martian!* hear your *Portia* speak.

Mar. Stand off, and touch me not, Polluted Fair.

Por. You shall not dash me from you till you hear me.

Emp. Ha! *Portia!* is this well? what means my Love?

Por. Begon, no more, the anxious Scene is over.

Enter a Messenger in haste.

Mess. O fly, Sir, quickly, if you yet have Time

To save your self from imminent Destruction.

Aurelian leads on the *Pretorian* Bands:

Who, with united Fury seek you out,

Vowing Revenge for *Martian's* Injuries;

I only have escap'd to give you Notice.

Emp. No more, —

Nor with thy Fears disturb my last Resolves:

Yes, I will fall as *Galienus* shou'd —

[*Draws.*

And do one piece of Justice e'r I die,

Upon that bold aspiring Traytor. [*Moves at Aurelian, who retires, draws; the Soldiers come behind, and seize the Emperor.*

Enter Aurelian, and Soldiers, speaks entering.

Aurel. Here, cease the Vulgar Slaughter; sieze the Tyrant:

My Fellow-soldiers, this is he, that Ground ye

With Poverty, for all your Toils, and Battles,

Fought in his vile Cause, ravish'd your Mothers,

Daughters, Sisters, butcher'd your Fathers.

And has unpeopled *Rome*, and drove your General,

Your brave *Martian*, from the Sacred Altar.

Seize too his Bride; who, tho' my Sister, falls

A Victim to my injur'd Friend and Honour.

Por. My Brother! this noble Fury that shou'd

Make thee dreadful, to me is fresh Endearment.

Mar. What do I hear! what strange new wonder's this?

Emp. *Aurelian!* this from thee, ungrateful Man;

Have I for this advanced thee to these Honours?

Aur. Thy Native Thirst of Guilt advanc me to 'em;

To bribe my Virtue, to betray my Friend,

Pervert my Sister, and to taint my Blood;

With Villanies a Soldier's Heart disdains.

To fix you safe, in doing daily Wrongs,

I turn'd thy cunning Arts against thy self,
To gain a Pow'r to do my Country Right;
Revenge m^e assaulted Honour, and my Friend.

Por. O the malignant Influence of my Stars!

Martian alive, and my lost Brother true,
And yet no Hopes of Happiness for me!

Mar. Art thou *Aurelian*, that hast done all this,
Or has some God assum'd thy awful Form?

Aur. My noble Friend, O fly to my Embrace:
My Heart has panted like a Virgin's for thee,
E're since I saw thee, lest my swift Relief
Shou'd be out-run by Fate, as it was ne're,
When my first Troops just snatch'd thee from Destruction.

Mar. When will the measure of my Woes be full?
If thou'rt *Aurelian*, I am more unhappy.

Aur. What do I hear? what was that fatal Sound?
O end me Gods; destroy this wretched Being,
Since I have liv'd to make my Friend unhappy.

Mar. It is thy Goodness, and thy Virtues wound me;
These call me Base, Ingrateful and Injurious;
For I have wrong'd thee —

Doubted thy Faith, believ'd thee false; nay, curs'd thee:
O turn those Curses on this guilty Head,
Good Gods, and show'r your Blessings all on him.

Aur. No more, my Friend, I gave but too much Cause,
But rather chose to cut thee to the quick,
Than not effect the cure of thy sick Fortune.

Mar. And canst thou then forgive thy guilty Friend?

Aur. O let me hold thee here, and tell thee so. [*they embrace.*]

Mar. O thou bright Beam of Comfort to my Soul;
That like the Morning Star dost promise Day
To the black Stormy Night of *Martian's* Sorrows.
Couldst thou but call a few past Minutes back,
I might be happy still. But oh! my Friend,
Behold that threatening Meteor that stands there;
She blasts my Hopes, forbids all Thoughts of Joy.

Emp. { Ha! what strange shooting Fires have seiz'd my Blood!
Aside. { I fear I've drank some deadly Poison, that breaks
My Thoughts, and disappoints my op'ning Hopes.
Of Empire, and of *Portia*, and of Revenge.

Mar. Canst thou believe it, Friend, the Virtuous *Portia*;
Thy Sister there is marry'd to the Tyrant.
I saw the horrid Mystery perform'd,
While the Earth shook, and Nature stood agast;
The yelling Furies held the Nuptial Torches,
And Hell was pleas'd with the Infernal Rites.

Por. If e'er unhappy *Portia* had your Heart;
If all your Vows and Oaths are not forgot;

O! by those tender Pledges I conjure you;
Hear me while I have Life to tell my Story.

Mar. Yes, I will hear thee, thus conjur'd, must hear thee;
For, how I lov'd, nay, I love thee still:
Witness these Pangs and Agonies I feel,
To find thee false.

Por. And O unequal Pow'rs,
That shed such baneful Influence on our Passions;
Bear witness to my Truth, to my vast Love!
Witness how much I doat on *Martian* still;
Spight of his hard Suspicions of my Virtue:
Witness how I have ever held him here,
Without a Rival.

Mar. Ha! can this be so?

Por. Oh! hear the fatal Story of my Love;
And see if ever Woman lov'd like me;
If ever Woman has been wrong'd like me;
If ever Woman was reveng'd like me.

Mar. Speak on---uncommon Love, Wrongs and Revenge,
There's mighty Meaning in these fatal Sounds.

Por. Had I but known, or cou'd have hop'd thy Life,
We had bin happy, thinking you no more,
Resolv'd on Death, a brave Revenge inspir'd me
To sink the Tyrant in his height of Triumph,
And punish all his Wrongs to thee and *Rome*,
And in the Bridal Bowl I drank a Poison,
In which, with thirsty Eagerness, he pledg'd me.

Emp. Was that the Philtre then, ingrateful Fair;
And yet it is so while, it burns my Bowels?
For from thy Virtue, tho' I draw my Death;
That very Deed does more encrease my Love.

Por. Oh! speak not to me; I hate the jarring Sound;
Nothing but Love and *Martian* now can please me ———
But oh! I faint; it tears each Vital Part,
Bursts all my Nerves into a thousand pieces,
And now assaults the last Retreats of Life.
O give me one kind word before I die.

Mar. Ten Thousand Thousand, for I'm Kindness all:
What fatal Story is it thou hast told us,
That joins th' Extreams of Joy, and wild Despair?
O my Friends! *Aurelian* and *Cleander*,
Why draw you not this Sword to pierce this Heart,
That has profan'd the best of all her Sex:
Blasphem'd this Goddess, doubted Truth her self. ———

Por. O my dear *Martian*, rack not thy poor Mind;
It was the wayward working of our Fate;
Appearance build'd thy furious Love to jealousy;
But I forgive thee.

The Roman Brides Revenge.

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Mar. How canst thou forgive me?

Por. Yes, Indeed I do,

And love thee, *Martian*, with so strange an Ardor,
That Words cannot express it.

Mar. Let me crawl

Thus on the Earth to meet thy gen'rous Pardon;
But how shall I approach thee, O my Love?
Thou art all fair, all white, without one Spot;
I All Contagion, and dark guilty Foulness.

Por. O! my Love, where art thou? — *[Faints.]*

Mar. Ha! see the pale Destroyer invades her;
Makes dismal Havock in this Field of Beauty,
And waists the rose Honours of her Face.

O! Ruin! Despair! O Horror, Hell and Furies!

Aur. Ah! my dear Sister, Innocent and Dead!

Mar. Ay, dead my Friend, but see she breaths again!

Por. O tell me ye bright Beings, where's my Love,
For ye must know the Hero of Mankind:
His Eyes dart Fire, and he perfumes Breaths;
Pleasing as dawn of Day, and awful as a God.

Mar. O charming Madness, when? she raves on Love.

Por. Oh! have I found my Truant out; come to my Arms;
We will be lost in Joys; the Tyrant's dead,
Plung'd in black Stix, and burning Flegeton:
See how the Furies toss him with their Prongs!

Emp. Ha! Furies and Styx, and burning Flegeton;
They're here indeed, and rend my tortur'd Body;
But any Pains for thee, thou charming Tyrant.

Por. Ha! art thou gone? mounted aloft? O stay!
The Gods will wait a while — we'll soar together.

Wilt thou not stay? I will pursue thee then;
Range all th' Ethereal Pallaces to find thee;
Accuse the Gods, upbraid unequal Jove,
'Till to appease me, and reward my Faith;
He gives my *Martian* to my Arms for ever.

O! I have got thee now; 'tis Heav'n — all beamy Joy! *[Dies.]*

Mar. She's gon, *Aurelian*, her bright Soul is fled,
And left the Beauteous Mansion of her Body;
O let me fix and gaze on thee for ever!

Will not my burning Kisses warm those Lips? *[Fixes himself, and gazes on her, sometimes kissing her.]*
Nor thine convey their deadly Cold to mine?

Emp. Yes, yes, she's gone, I see her starry Soul
Mount yonder; see, she makes a Galaxie!

Ha! the Gods are now my Rivals. I come,
My Eagle bears me from this Burning Pile,
To all my Kindred Deities above,
So have I caught thee, peevish Fair; away

Hear me to *Pindus* Shades; the *Muses* there
 Shall sing aloud our Hymeneal Song,
 To the soft Murmurs of fair *Helicon*;
 While we upon the blest *Castalian* Shoar,
 Consummate our unfinish'd Loves. See, see,
Calliope, *Erato*, *Clio*, *Euterpe*,
 And all the rest of the Immortal Nine:
 O hear the Mystic Numbers of their Verse,
 Full of thy Beauties, and my raging Love. —

Mur. Ah my poor Love, is this thy Bridal Bed?
 Death the cold Lover, that must fill thy Arms?

Emp. Be gone, fond *Martian*, tell not me of Business,
 There, that's your Man; what's the dull World to me?
 Let the mad Heroes scramble for Crowns and Scepters;
 Give me more Beauty, young Balmy Boys and Girls.
 Ha! still oppos'd in my soft Round of Pleasure?
 Cut off that sawcy Virtue there that awes me!
 Why am I Emperor, but to have my Will?
 Ha! Treason! Assassins! Daggers! Poisons!

Mur. See how his Soul, ev'n in its Agony,
 Exerts it self, and burns with the same Fires.

Emp. What, all the Earth and Firmament on Fire?
 Nay, then I must burn too. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

See that decrepit Stoic there, he'd fain
 Plunge in the Sea, to save his Beard from Fire:
 Look how the Blind, the Lame, haggard Poverty,
 Loathsome Diseases, all scamper from kind Death!
 Why shou'd they shun Death that know no Pleasure?
 See how that Priest too leaves his Gods in th' Lurch,
 To save himself: Ha! ha! ha! how that old Ladies paint
 Melts from her Face, and leaves her Furrows empty.
 Oh dreadful Sight! what, Kings and Emperors too,
 Burnt like common Chaff! Ah poor *Valeria*!

Cannot this Heart dry up thy Tears? No matter,
 Steal down to *Tectis*, in her Corral Bed;
 The Conflagration will not reach thee there. Ha!
 True, 'tis a Funeral Pile, that's worthy me,
 When all Mankind's the Fewel; Age and Youth,
 Beauty and Detormity, Vice and Virtue;
 How I rejoice that Pleasure dies with me.
 Ha! Thunder! Whirlwinds of tempestuous Fire!
 See how the flaming Billows rowl this way!
 How they consume me! oh! 'tis soultry hot!
 My Guards, *Romans*, clap *Tyber* in betwixt me:
Euphrates, *Ganges*, *Nile*, O 'twill not do.
 See, they're drank up all with one thirsty Blast:
 O for whole Oceans; see I burn, I burn; oh!
 Ha! tofs'd in a moment to these Lakes of Ice!

The Roman Brides Revenge.

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Gods, now I frieze! ah! cold! Shivering cold---oh! [*dies*]

Aur. He's dead; the Plague of *Rome* is now no more;
My Friend, what! gazing still upon my Sister:
See here how well she has reveng'd thy Wrongs.

Mar. O do not rouse me from this lovely Horror!
Let me run wild in gazing on my *Portia*!
She has not lost the Charms of her dear Eyes:
For tho' their Summer warming Sun be set,
These trembling Beauties of her winter'd Night,
Dart shivering Pleasures thro' my shaking Heart.
O let me look upon their chilling Brightness,
Till unperceiv'd it frieze away my Life.

Aur. You must not throw your useful Life away,
When *Rome* demands you for her Lord, and claims
Her Freedom from you.

Mar. O do not shock my Soul with Thoughts of Empire:
Am I a Prospect for my Countrys Hopes?
No, no, I am the last, and worst of Men:
A wretched Outcast, the meer Druff of Nature!
Bankrupt of Virtue, what can *Rome* hope from me,
But greater Ills, than what I've done already?
For who destroy'd this Beauteous Maid? But I,
Who rack'd her with Doubts, ev'n in the Pangs of Death:
'Twas I, who has abus'd thy Virtue too;
But I! stand off, touch not such foul Infection!
Never forgive me, as thou'rt Friend to Justice,
Honour or Love, ——— but spurn me from thee:
Spurn me to my black Kindred, Shades below,
Thus, thus, and thus. ——— [*Stabs himself, and falls.*]

Aur. What has your Frenzy done? but with that Blow,
Destroy'd us all?

Clean. O my dear Master, see; [*taking up his Master's Dagger.*]
I follow you.

Mar. I charge thee by thy Love,
Thy honest Love for thy unhappy Master;
I charge thee live, thy Liberty I give thee.

Clean. O do not bind me to this Rack of Life;
What boots my Freedom, when all Joy is lost;

Mar. I must bequeath thee as a valued Gift
To my brave Friend; therefore I charge thee live,
If thou wou'dst have thy Master die in Peace.

Aur. Talk not of Gifts to me, ah cruel *Martian*;
Think not I love thee with so frail a Passion,
To quit my Friend in Death, more than Distress:
No *Martian*, I will copy out this Deed,
As I have strove to do your past.

Mar. Oh! Live!
Your Friend, your Country, and th' immortal Gods,

Impose

Impose your Life for Agonizing Rome;
 The publick Good shou'd rule your private Will.
 For tho' I lov'd the best of Womankind;
 The perfect Image of the Gods themselves:
 Yet, since that private Passion lull'd the Crys,
 And drown'd the Groans of m'expiring Country,
 The Gods have snatch'd her from me by strange Means;
 And took the Glory of deliv'ring Rome
 From out my Guilty Hands, to give it thee.
 Make Rome thy Mistress, then Honour, Renown,
 Success and Joy will crown thy happy Life.

Aur. There's something so Divine, and Awful in you;
 It fixes me in Life against my Will;
 Makes me the Victim of the Public Good.

Mar. 'Tis well resolv'd, my Friend,
 But oh! I faint——reward *Cleander's* Faith,
 I can no more, this one Embrace, my Friend, [Embraces him.
 And this for thee—and now farewell for ever! [Embraces Cleander.
 Ah, my dear *Portia*, lo thy *Martian* comes,
 My Soul is restless from thee. Put our Ashes
 Within one common Urn——oh! my *Portia*! [Dies.

Cl. He's dead, my Master's dead; [Pauses
 O hard Command;
 Yet here I'll fix, and sure this Sight will end me,
 Without a Dagger, O! break my stubborn Heart.

Aur. His dying Words shall be obey'd——no more;
 Methinks I see his how'ring Soul look down,
 And with an awful Nod forbid our Sorrows;
 Full of that Heav'n he has within his View:
 And pointing to his Breathless Body there,
 Methinks I hear him thunder out aloud
 To all the listning World this Godlike Maxim
 Learn from my Fate, that Tyes of Love or Blood
 Are of no Force against the Public Good.

F I N I S.